



NEWSLETTER

February 20, 2026

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

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

Dear Academy Families,

Thank you for all of your time, effort, and support! You really matter and we are grateful to you!

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



Date:	Event:
3/4	Early Release 12:45pm
3/5-6	Staff Work Days NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
3/9-13	Spring Break!
3/16	Back to School
3/26	Alyeska Ski Day
3/27	No School
3/31-4/2	6 th Grade Juneau Trip



LAST FRONTIER HONOR FLIGHT COIN DRIVE

The Academy Charter eighth grade class is raising money to support Last Frontier Honor Flight, a nonprofit organization that gives veterans the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C., and see the memorials dedicated to their service and sacrifice.

You can help by donating your spare change! Coin jars will be located at local businesses and at the front desk of Academy Charter. Every penny collected helps send a veteran on the trip of a lifetime. If your business or organization is willing to "host" a jar, please reach out to Mrs. Molina at stacy.molina@matsuk12.us

Thank you for joining us in honoring those who have served — every donation, big or small, makes a difference!



➤ 2nd Semester Friday lunch sign-up sheets are up in the front office! **If you are available between 11:45 and 12:25pm on Fridays, please sign up!**

Kindergarten



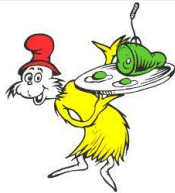
Kindergarten worked on color words this week. Our box of crayons has 5 varieties of blue, so you may be hearing about indigo or cerulean. We have completed over 111 days of school and students thought of things they have learned in that time. We added 15 words to our spelling notebooks. Great job, students!!

During our math block we worked on greater than, less than and equal to and how to show them as equations. We also worked on skip counting by 2s, 5s and tens. Students were reassessed on naming the coins and their values. Some still need a bit more practice. We would appreciate your help at home if your student still needs it. A paper was sent home and it is part of their math grade in Synergy.

We will be making green eggs and ham for snack on Dr. Seuss' birthday, March 2. Please sign up to send supplies or be a helper on the signup sheet by the office.

Feel free to contact me anytime.

Mrs. Berg Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



hello FIRST GRADE

- 1st-Grade Core Knowledge Poetry booklets have started! They explored and enjoyed "Hope" by Langston Hughes, "I Know All the Sounds that the Animals Make" by Jake Perlutsky, "The Owl and the Pussycat" by Edward Lear, "The Purple Cow" by Gelett Burgess, and "Sing a Song of People" by Lois Lenski.
- We are all "tuning into interesting words" to build our vocabulary! Every day we add a few words to our chart!
- 3D shapes with the highlight of creating multiple shapes with toothpicks and mini marshmallows.

Contact us anytime!

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond

Betsy.Mayer@matsuk12.us

Jessica.Drummond@matsuk12.us



2ND GRADE

We had another wonderful week of learning in second grade!

In literacy, students have been hard at work writing nonfiction animal reports. They are researching fascinating facts, organizing their information, and sharing their learning in clear, informative writing. We also continued practicing identifying adverbs and noticing how they make our sentences more detailed and interesting.

In math, we focused on telling time to the quarter hour. Students practiced reading both analog and digital clocks and understanding what :15 and :45 mean on the clock face.

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer

Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us

Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us

Grimes Gambit

Language Arts Update - This week in Language Arts, we began our new unit, *Learning from the Land*. These historical fiction stories are told from a child's point of view and help students learn about the contributions children made within different Native American tribes. Our first story focuses on a hunter-gatherer community.

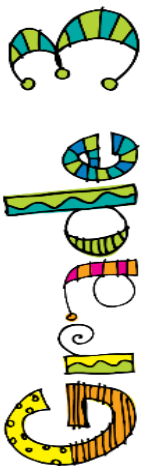
Students also practiced using synonyms, began working on possessive pronouns, and celebrated finishing **List Q in Spalding**—an exciting accomplishment! I am so proud of their continued hard work.



Math Update - This week in Math, we wrapped up our Area and Perimeter Zoo projects! Students were given specific perimeters for each animal enclosure and used their math skills to design and build their zoos. They created the enclosures, colored their animals, and assembled their own paper zoos—such a fun way to apply what they've learned!

We also began our new unit on measurement. Students will be working with capacity, weight, and length as they solve a variety of math problems in the weeks ahead.

Mrs. Grimes Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us



The Glanville Weekly

Language Arts: We started Unit 8, *Learning from the Land*, this week. The students have enjoyed learning about how Native Americans crossed over the frozen land bridge from Asia into Alaska and then continued further south across the United States. We studied the Mound Builder tribes of the Mississippi River and the tribes of the Southwest.

Students also read two stories, *Etu the Hunter* and *Akando and Aponi the Gatherers*. It was fun to hear the students' thoughts on whether they would choose to live a nomadic or a stationary lifestyle. Ask your student which they would prefer!

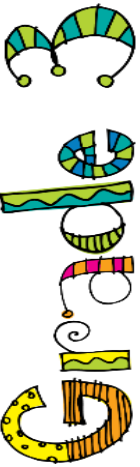
We have moved into our final Spalding list section for the year and completed our test. Next week, we will take our monthly spelling assessment, so no spelling list will come home.

Math: We have moved into our next chapter on measurement. Students learned about capacity, volume, weight, and mass through hands-on activities. They practiced estimating the size of objects in liters, milliliters, grams, and kilograms.

This chapter also introduces more challenging two- and three-step word problems. We have worked hard on becoming "math detectives," looking for clue words and identifying the important information needed to solve problems. The students are doing well and rising to the challenge! Next week, we will be working on time increments.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out.

Mrs. Glanville Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE



Nielsen's News:

ELA-

- **Reading-**We have begun our Treasure Island unit. Beware, your child might start speaking like a pirate! In this unit we will dive deep into adventure narratives, discussing character descriptions, event sequences, plot, etc.
- **Writing:** Students created their own maps for their own adventure stories that they will write during this unit. They began writing descriptive settings and introducing main characters.
- **Spalding-** We continued with List R and focused on Rule 10, Two syllable words (be gin) in which the second syllable is accented and ends in one consonant with one vowel before it, need another final consonant (begin+ning) before adding an ending that begins with a vowel.
- **Grammar:** Students practiced with relative adverbs: where, when, and why.

Math- Decimal place value of tenths and hundredths was the focus this week. We worked a lot on equivalent fractions and decimals, adding fractions of tenths and hundredths and converting them to decimals, and comparing decimals.

Mrs. Nielsen

Laurie.Nielsen@matsuk12.us

Benbow's Buzz

Language Arts - We worked so hard to finish up our study of the American Revolution this week. We read about and discussed the lives of soldiers, especially those at Valley Forge. We learned about how George Washington helped his troops survive the horrible conditions and the role that women and children played on the battlefield. Please remember that there is a minimum daily requirement of reading for at least 30 minutes every day for all fourth graders! We will continue to practice sentence writing every morning, which consists of identifying and correcting fragments and run-on sentences, as well as unscrambling sentences and writing all four sentence types. We are practicing adding dependent clauses that provide contextual information during our spelling lessons. Additionally, our Daily Language Review topics this week are punctuating dialogue, making plural nouns and identifying similes.

Math - Although we continued our fractions unit this week, we also took a brief pause to refresh our brains on the processes of multiplication and division! We reviewed converting mixed numbers to improper fractions and vice versa, then applied that knowledge to completing multiplication of fractions by whole numbers. Automatic recall is vital to success in fourth grade math, even as we work through fractions! Although we will continue to practice multiplication facts every day in class, I do ask that you make sure that your child finds time at home to practice as well. Just a few minutes a day can make such a difference.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns!

cherie.benbow@matsuk12.us

5TH GRADE

The Manley Minute:

Language Arts: Welcome to the Renaissance...where everything is new! As we are embarking into this new unit, students are full of wonder and excitement! Ever since we took a field trip to visit DaVinci's inventions at the beginning of the year, students have been eagerly awaiting this unit. We began by learning the time period of the Renaissance and the factors that inspired the Renaissance. Of course, we fit Spalding in the week as well. They are proud to be on List W, which is a new list for me as well. The students have excelled at applying the rules and syllabication patterns to our new words.

Math: We are finished with Chapter 8! Students have been comparing fractions, finding the least common multiple, greatest common factor, modeling fractions as decimals and writing fractions as decimals. Although converting uncommon fractions to decimals can be a bit challenging, this group is pushing through and working hard.

Many students have completed at least 2 of their Quicktables and a couple have completed all of them! I'm proud of their hard work on ALEKS as well. Keep up the good work!

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!

Language Arts--When I think back to the beginning of the year, I am very pleased with the progress this class has made in their ability to analyze words. They are becoming more consistent in their abilities to identify syllabication patterns and use the Spalding rules to help spell words. Let's keep it up!

We (mostly) wrapped up our Renaissance unit this week by writing a biography about either Leonardo da Vinci or Michaelangelo. I suspect some students will need to finish their final drafts next week, but the students did a great job researching and creating a rough draft this week.

Math--Fractions can be so much fun! Once students proved they could multiply mixed numbers, they were able to enjoy building their very own mini doghouse. I've enjoyed all of the creativity that has gone into their creations. The students also took their chapter test on multiplying and dividing fractions and had some great scores. As fractions are a core skill in 5th grade, we will continue to work with them as we move on to our next chapter.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us

SCHUMACHER MATH

My math students continued fraction operation practice this week. Those who were ready for assessment started on Friday. A few fraction masters worked on surveys. If your child was unable to complete a survey, we will share data with them for assignments. We celebrated our success in multiplication and addition fact fluency with a QT party on Thursday. Hopefully we will finish these skills soon and earn a complete fluency party.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

Mercado 2026 Statistics

A talented group of 32 fifth grade students created artful posters, fun and hilarious games and worked extremely hard setting up, cooking and vending on Mercado Day!

There were over 700 churros fried!

Ten fifth grade parents operated a very successful churro factory or helped clean up after the Mercado.

Two middle school classes contributed extra time and energy helping fifth graders achieve success.

At least 13 Cottage Industries were started, which included:

Silva's Suncatchers, Riley's Roses, Pam's Patterns and Tattoos, Em's Stems, Bell's Bracelets, Audrey's Funky Scrunchies, Kendall's Keychains, Elsie's Terrific Tiles, Jade's Jewelry, Olivia's Little Critters, Tantarella's Treasures, Ariana's Awesomely Creative Bracelets, and of course Mario's Miraculous Beast LLC!

The total raised for our 2026 Global Community Service Project was \$1971.45.

Students raised \$1,174.15 to La Puerta Abierta towards construction of their new Preschool.

Students contributed \$797.30 to Global Community Partner Heart of The Sky Fair Trade. Both organizations contribute to the well-being and education of people in need in Guatemala.

I am so proud of our fifth-grade class!



K-5 Lab Classes



The art room was bursting with color this week as kindergarten, first, and second grade all worked on glazing their ceramic pieces!

Students carefully painted bright, glossy colors onto their creations, watching their artwork come to life with every brushstroke. There were lots of thoughtful choices, creative color combinations, and very focused artists. Everyone did an amazing job, and we can't wait to see these pieces come out of the kiln shiny and finished—it's always like opening a surprise!

Mrs. Glanville and Mrs. Saunders



This has been our final week with 3rd-5th for this rotation.

All of the grades worked on figuring out how to use quotations marks when writing dialogue. They also learned how to create an outline, then use that outline to write a story. It is great fun to read their creative works and see them using their writing lab skills in their compositions.

Mrs. Sturgis & Ms. Kile



Español with Señorita Catarina

Third, Fourth and Fifth Graders ended their Panama Unit conversing about themselves in Spanish. They also created beautiful paper Molans in the style of the fabric Molans used as clothing by the Indigenous Kuna People of Panama.



Third grade- worked on Google sheets, entering data and learning to make charts and graphs.

Fourth grade- finished their interactive timelines on Google sheets and continued their final project in Google slides.

Fifth grade- completed their states presentations in Google slides.

Mrs. Nielsen



What a fun week in primary science!

Kindergarten continued our unit on Changing Environments with checking up on our terrariums and considering how plants and animals affect their surroundings.

First grade began a unit on Human Body Systems, starting with exploring what bones, muscles, lungs, and heart contribute to our whole-body functions.

After learning about Alaskan animal tracks, second grade ventured into the woods to check out our trail cam and find animal tracks along the trail. Such fun all around!

We're looking forward to welcoming back intermediate grades next week.

Ms. Heppner & Mr. Farring
Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us
Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us



Kindergarten - Ancient Egypt unit, geography and pharaohs.

1st grade - Exploring the West unit, Daniel Boone and the Wilderness Road.

2nd grade - Civil War unit, slavery and the Underground Railroad.

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



Middle School Spanish

Sixth graders are finishing up with their calendar vocabulary. They learned this week that one of their favorite foods - chocolate - comes from Mexico. They learned about the history of the cacao plant, invented a chocolate bar in the flavor of their favorite month and spoke about it in Spanish. Some students even brought their zany flavored chocolate to life for extra credit in Spanish class.

Seventh Graders are getting the hang of possessive adjectives. They are easy to use but a sticking point for 7th graders is remembering that, as with regular adjectives, they need to match the number and gender of the nouns they modify. Seventh graders wrote about their classmates and their positive attributes this week.

Eighth graders have started working with boot verbs. They played a lively game of Vocabulary Fishbowl during which they draw, act out and act out under a blanket as students try to guess vocabulary. We celebrated our first-class holiday and hope to have another in a few weeks.

Spanish 1 is reviewing Ser vs. Estar. We are working with vocabulary of sickness and emotion, and they are creating their own skits to share this vocabulary in an amusing way with others.

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



4th-8th Grade

Outdoor Fitness

We enjoyed running, playing games, and sledding during outdoor fitness. Seventh grade met with our architects and interior designers to share their creative ideas for high school design. Students exercised with snowshoes and packed down trails. Good job with your cold, snowy thoughts!

Mr. Schumacher

Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

Mrs. Molly

Molly.Nichols@matsuk12.us



Sixth grade has been busy and full of meaningful learning across all subject areas!

Language Arts: Both classes finished writing their government letters and wrapped up our novel study of *Sophia's War*. Students engaged in thoughtful discussions about the Revolutionary War and explored how those events helped shape our early government. It was exciting to see students making connections between history, literature, and civic responsibility.

Math: Mrs. Zerkel's class is currently working on inequalities and strengthening their understanding of mathematical relationships. Mr. Chadwell's class has completed the coordinate plane and has begun working with algebraic equations. Students are building confidence as they apply new skills and problem-solving strategies.

Social Studies: Students are diving into the Constitution, learning about its purpose, structure, and importance in our system of government. This ties in nicely with our recent work in Language Arts and helps deepen students' understanding of how our government functions.



As always, thank you for your continued support. Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

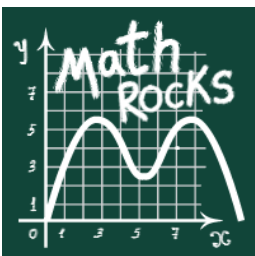
Mr. Chadwell and Mrs. Zerkel Jordan.Chadwell@matsuk12.us Katherine.Zerkel@matsuk12.us



We began the week learning about the different types of energy. Students explored key vocabulary and discussed examples of how energy appears in everyday life. Later in the week, they applied their new knowledge during a hands-on lab focused on identifying energy transformations.

Students did a great job recognizing how energy changes from one form to another in real-world situations!

Mrs. Strohmeyer Cynthia.Strohmeyer@matsuk12.us



It has been an excellent week in 6th grade math! We have worked through the end of our chapter on algebraic expressions and order of operations, and my students have been very focused. Next week we'll mop up any last bits with expressions and dive into our chapter on algebraic equations. We are also working on a homework challenge right now, and students are all in! I've been very proud of how hard each one has worked to contribute to the group effort. Don't forget that there are ALEKS topics due every week. Our new weekly goal is 12 topics. Keep up the good work!

Mrs. Heppner Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

“Everyone who remembers his own education remembers teachers, not methods and techniques. The teacher is the heart of the educational system.” – Sidney Hook

Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Students are reading and responding their way through both *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallis and Jack London's *Call of the Wild*. They learned how plot diagrams/parts of story relate to character arc and took notes on arcs in literature. They began their six-week, script writing project by creating a character inside the world of their chosen book. They'll write a plot to act on their character to create a positive arc. On Thursday, they Zoomed with filmmakers Brittani Woods-Orrison and Princess Daazhrai Johnson, who filmed a version of *Two Old Women*, to discuss book-to-screen adaptation and the challenges of funding a large project.

Wright, 7th math: This week, students began Chapter 10s study on statistics and data collection. They were introduced to data talks and began a project to create their own, due before spring break. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday.

Wright 7th history: The class took notes in various ways on the causes of the Great Depression. Using a poem of those causes, they created visuals to accompany a song to help them remember. They also discussed an excerpt from *The Boys in the Boat* at the Harkness table. On Monday, they'll take a quiz on the causes of the Great Depression and go on a virtual field trip to the Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, NY to learn about FDR's New Deal.

All hand-outs and homework are on Classroom or ConnectEd. 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. They demonstrated knowledge of spelling and use of ten vocabulary words with the root “rupt” and assigned 10 more words with the roots “ceed, cede, cess.” Please work with your students on their spelling and definitions each week to support success. Students finished All Quiet on the Western Front. After each chapter, discussions were held, and students completed 10-question, multiple-choice, open-book quizzes. We reviewed the importance of setting, learned more about the author and the controversy of the book for its graphic representation of war, and looked at the book’s timeline with actual events of WWI. Students ended the week demonstrating their understanding of the novel on a 40-question, multiple-choice, open-book summative assessment and began viewing the 1931 movie version. Students will eventually be writing a five-paragraph opinion essay supporting their preference for the book or movie. For this week’s writing entry, they wrote about a recent act of kindness they performed and its impact on themselves and the recipients.

In Math, students finished Chapter 5 on Expressions. They learned how to add, subtract, and factor linear expressions, demonstrating understanding on quizzes for each. The summative assessments, both vocabulary and skills, are scheduled for next Tuesday. Students should be preparing their notebooks for support and engaging in extra practice on the lessons they are still struggling with. 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 current chapter of learning.

Students in History continued building geography skills, using atlases to identify answers to a variety of questions, and completed an open-note quiz on Weeks 17-20. The week included taking a look at the pop culture of the 1920s, specifically the impact of the affordable Ford Model T, mass entertainment, a general timeline of “firsts,” and famous people of the decade. Students also reviewed the Great Migration and its connection to the Harlem Renaissance, with an analysis of the poem “Heritage” by Countee Cullen, along with other prominent figures in the arts and literature. We ended the week with prohibition and the 18th and 21st Amendments and the suffrage movement, resulting in the 19th Amendment. Students enjoyed a student-friendly episode of current events, as well.

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

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Science was explosive this week. We learned about chemical reactions by completing a lab that mixes baking soda and vinegar to create carbon dioxide gas that fills a balloon. It was fun to watch the students' reactions! Students also learned how to read chemical formulas and count how many atoms are in substances such as sucrose C₁₂H₂₂O₁₁.

Next week we will be reviewing everything we learned about atoms, elements, the periodic table and chemical and physical properties in order to prepare for Thursday text.

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us



Middle School Art-Ventures with Ms. Christensen

Sixth grade is finishing their polar bear portraits, and seventh grade is painting their selfies on clear acetate with another background painting on canvas. Here are some pictures of our seventh graders working on their self-portraits.



It is incredible how quickly February is flying by! Each year, the 8th graders always lament how quickly this final year of middle school passes, and it is truly mind boggling.

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! Our current lessons focus on solving systems of equations which are tough, but they are such hard workers and refuse to let this topic stump them!

The Honors English I students are now well over half-way through Homer's Odyssey and their Harkness discussions never disappoint. This week we also enjoyed the students' (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. The 8th graders are also working on their We Didn't Start the Fire projects which is always a class favorite!

Have a great weekend & stay warm,

Mrs. Molina
Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us



This week in Algebra 1 we finished up our look into quadratics and will be starting our look into square root functions!



This week we wrapped up our unit around the chemical properties of food and respiration! It was a great time looking into how to read nutrition labels and how this is applicable for every day of their lives!

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us

Manley's Minute: English 1

We have officially finished *The Good Earth*! I am proud of the focus and perseverance students showed as we brought this powerful story to a close. The thoughtful responses from their unit tests displayed deep understanding of the themes covered in the novel.

Prior to our test, students completed a quote analysis task. Each student drew a random quote from the novel, identified the speaker, explained the context, and analyzed its significance to the overall themes of the story. Although it was an intimidating task at first, students demonstrated strong recall of the quotes and make appropriate connections.

Our final Harkness discussion was over the main character, Wang Lung. Students justified their reasoning on whether Wang Lung should be considered a tragic figure or a flawed hero and justified their opinions using evidence from the text.

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us