



NEWSLETTER

February 27, 2026

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

Phone: 907-746-2358
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Dear Academy Families,

We have had a very busy week! We are so grateful for all of your assistance, help, and ongoing support! Together we can! Together we do!

Bus Strike Begins Monday

There is a strong likelihood that the bus drivers will strike on Monday, and the strike may continue for an extended period of time. Families are asked to begin planning to provide daily transportation for their student to and from the Academy daily.



We appreciate your understanding and patience!

Academy's 2026–27 Calendar Moving Forward for Approval by the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED)

The Academy's 2026–27 school calendar will soon move forward for approval by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED). The development of the annual school calendar is guided by requirements set forth in Alaska State law and regulations, as well as negotiated agreements. The State requires a minimum of 172 student contact days, or an approved equivalent number of student contact hours for the school year.

Under the negotiated agreement between MSBSD and the various employee unions, staff work 185 days. These 185 days include:

- 10 professional development days (training)
- 4 workdays for classroom organization and preparation
- 1 vacation day

The Academy uses the MSBSD calendar template as the foundation for building our annual calendar. The template is thoughtfully designed to structure the school year in a way that maximizes learning and instructional focus. We intentionally begin a few days earlier than the district so that our school year concludes in early May, when families are naturally turning their attention to summer plans. The Academy's calendar is submitted to the MSBSD School Board as part of its review packet, and final approval is granted by DEED.

Questions? Concerns?

Please do not hesitate to call, come in, text, email. We care!

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



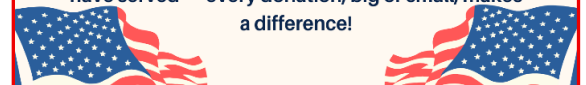
Date:	Event:
3/4	Early Release 12:45pm
3/5-6	Staff Work Days NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
3/9-13	Spring Break!
3/16	Back to School
3/26	Alyeska Ski Day

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!



- Remove the brown protective paper from the floor of the repaired upstairs classroom, then vacuum and prepare the floor for the new carpeting to be installed.
- Paint the stairwell in the two-story building. We have the paint and supplies.
- Are you available from 1:15-2:30pm Tues-Thurs? Technology lab would love to have a parent volunteer to help students! No experience required! Sign up sheet is in front of the office.
- 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



Please be sure your student has a healthy snack packed separately from their lunch. They also need a water bottle every day. Thank you!

This week we began enjoying stories by Dr. Seuss. He wrote more than 60 children's books spanning 7 decades. Some of his books are at a great readability level for our students since we have learned so many phonograms and have become competent decoders. We will enjoy some more of his books next week, including Green Eggs and Ham. Thank you to all the families that have signed up to help.

During our math block we worked on different ways to show a number. Students used drawings and equations (addition and subtraction) to show combinations for numbers four through seven. I am so proud of how hard they work and all they have come to understand.

Today, Friday was our room switch day. Students may need a reminder to line up with the new room come Monday morning:-)

Our class could use some cleaning wipes if anyone has a chance to pick some up. We appreciate your help.

Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Berg Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



hello FIRST GRADE

- Students completed their first paragraphs! Woohoo!
- We celebrated the 120th day of school during math on Friday!
- Dr. Seuss books are out and being enjoyed! Please consider coming in on Wednesday (4th of March) to help students make green eggs and ham. There are still two slots available - sign up on FB!
- Knocked double-digit subtraction **WITH** regrouping out of the park!

HAPPY SPRING BREAK EVERYONE!

Contact us anytime!

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



2ND GRADE

In math, we've been working hard on telling time to the minute and practicing elapsed time. Students are learning to use phrases like quarter past and quarter till and are becoming more confident reading clocks and figuring out how much time has passed between events.

In literacy, we began writing an opinion piece debating an important classroom question: Which is superior—sweet or sour candy? Students are learning to state their opinion clearly and support it with strong reasons. We also focused on verb tense, making sure our writing stays consistent and clear.

To top it off, we started reading the book Freckle Juice and are already enjoying the humor and lively characters!

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



Grade 3



Grimes Gambit

Language Arts – What a great week! We continued our journey through Native American stories, exploring tales ranging from basket weavers in the Southwest to stories from the Arctic. Students also completed their first List R Spalding word entry in their notebooks. In addition, we worked on identifying and understanding antonyms and synonyms.

Math – This week in math, we continued our work with measurement, shifting our focus from capacity to mass and time. Students are also cruising through their multiplication and division five-minute tests and making great progress on their ALEKS pies. Keep up the awesome work!

Mrs. Grimes Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us

The Glanville Weekly

Language Arts: We continued with Unit 8, learning about the different regions the Native Americans inhabited and comparing their environments. We discussed how the Mississippian mound builders lived near rivers and created irrigation systems to grow crops. The Ancestral Puebloans (adobe) had to find reliable water sources and perform traditional ceremonial dances to ask for rainfall. We also learned about the Northeastern tribes who lived in forests, either in longhouses or wigwams. The students discussed which type of home they would prefer, and which would best suit their families' needs. Ask your child which one they chose and why! They also read four historical fiction stories about children living in these tribes and learned about how they practiced their traditional ways of life.

Next week, we will wrap up this unit by learning about tribes that inhabited the Arctic region and completing a fun end of unit project! There will be a 21-word spelling test next week. The list is coming home today.

Math: Our math group is full of such hard workers! We continued being "math detectives" by solving complex, multi-step word problems, and we are all heading in the right direction, building confidence along the way. I love seeing them no longer feel nervous to tackle these problems but instead take on the challenge and learn from the process!

After spring break, we will dive right into our next chapter: fractions! Students are progressing quickly in mastering their multiplication and division facts by taking daily five-minute tests. It is so fun to see their growth! We also continued working in ALEKS to fill their 3rd-grade pie.

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

Mrs. Glanville Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Benbow's Buzz



Nielsen's News:

ELA-

- **Reading-** Our class is LOVING *Treasure Island*! It is hard to put it down each day. Our discussions have been on prediction/foreshadowing and character and setting descriptions.
- **Writing:** Students' narratives are coming along splendidly. Students have written wonderful descriptions of settings and their first characters and are working on writing riveting beginnings to their stories.
- **Spalding-** We finished List R and focused on Rule 9 and 19
- **Grammar:** Students practiced with order of adjectives and worked on the root: bio.

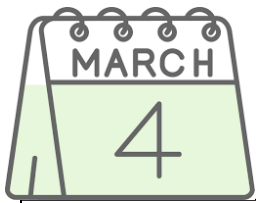
Math- This week we started standard measurement. We covered standard length and capacity, working on conversions between each unit.

Mrs. Nielsen Laurie.Nielsen@matsuk12.us

Language Arts - We worked so hard to finish up our study of the American Revolution this week! We read about and discussed the Treaty of Paris, then rewrote the Articles from that treaty in words we can understand. We learned about how British Lord Cornwallis did not march with his men for the official surrender at the end of the war. Our last few kiddos are reciting the first two sentences of the Declaration of Independence. 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 recognizing run-on sentences, capitalizing titles of songs and books, making plurals and correcting sentence errors.

Math - We finally finished our fractions unit this week! We will continue to review fractions, especially converting between improper fractions and mixed numbers. We entered geometry terms in math notebooks to begin our geometry unit, then covered points, lines, line segments, rays and angles. We practiced measuring and drawing angles and finding missing measurements within angles. 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 you to 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:

It's less than one week until our Book Club! On **March 4**, students will be discussing the book they were assigned. If they are not finished with their novel, please do so by this weekend!

Language Arts: *'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe.* The opening line of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" tells the reader that this poem is consists of nonsense words! This week, students had a blast analyzing this poem and deciphering the part of speech for each word to help them understand the meaning. They went on to create their own rendition of the poem and shared them with the class. It was such a fun poem to explore!

We also entered 30 more words from list W into our Spalding notebooks and took the spelling test on Thursday. As the word lists increase in difficulty, students excel at dissecting the words and recognizing the rules. I'm very proud of them!

Math: This week we dove into adding and subtracting fractions with like *and unlike* denominators! Using models to show their work helps them understand this foundational concept. We also looped back around to change improper fractions to mixed numbers and vice versa as this is an essential skill when working with fractions.

It is a "race to the finish line" for completing their 5th grade ALEKS pie. The top 5 positions on the leader board are just 4% apart! With hard work and perseverance, I am confident that ALL students can finish their pie this year!

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

SCHUMACHER MATH

All my math students were assessed in their fraction operation skills this week. We studied measures of central tendency and variation with mean, median, mode, range, quartiles, and outliers from survey data and the book. A few fraction and stats masters worked on charts or statistics for their surveys.

Enjoy you weekend!

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!

Language Arts--As you may have noted, this week's spelling test was graded on a curve. This was due to me being out for a few days which meant the students did not work on the words in class. Students tend to perform better on the test when given a chance to analyze using their knowledge of Spalding rule and phonograms.

The next spelling test will be on the Wednesday after Spring Break. Word lists went home on Wednesday. If your child has lost theirs, please have them come talk to me before break so I can get them a new list.

I was hoping we could finish the Renaissance biographies last week but have needed to work on them this week. Students have completed a rough draft and are working on a revised draft before doing a draft that will be graded. Several students will need to do some work at home in order to finish this assignment before break.

Math--I am very pleased to report that all students passed our Chapter 10 test on multiplying and dividing fractions. Next week we will do some review activities and prepare for our next chapter which will focus on measurement.

Mrs. Sturgis
Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



4th-8th Grade Outdoor Fitness

We enjoyed downhill skiing and snow construction before the cold hit for outdoor fitness. In the gym students ran and got a workout before we played games.

Keep sending in that warm gear, we are only a few degrees off from going back out for exercise.

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

K-5 Lab Classes



Our upper grade artists had a big week in the art room! Third, fourth, and fifth graders finished glazing their ceramic pieces and put the final touches on their cardboard self-portraits—and they turned out amazing. This wraps up our ceramics unit, and students did such a fantastic job showing patience, creativity, and craftsmanship.

Now we're excited to begin brand-new units: third grade will explore space in art, fourth grade will dive into Medieval art, and fifth grade will discover the Renaissance. We can't wait to see all the new ideas and creativity these topics will inspire!

Mrs. Glanville and Mrs. Saunders



Kindergarten through 2nd grade worked hard in writing lab this week. All grades worked on expanding their vocabulary and using those words to create complete sentences.

First and second grade wrote acrostic poems while kindergarten developed their understanding of rhyming words. -- Mrs. Sturgis

This week, kindergarten first and second grade began the exploration of poetry. We discussed several terms such as onomatopoeia, personification, and alliteration. We also talked about rhyming. --Ms. Kile



Español with Señorita Catarina

Kindergartners are learning their color words and singing, dancing, laughing and chanting up a storm in Spanish class. First and second graders are learning the Spanish words for their emotions and had a good discussion about Sofia (in our story) who gets very, very enojada!



Kindergarten is working on coding. They are learning to build algorithms and debug incorrect and incomplete algorithms.

First Grade and Second Grade were introduced to Google Slides and will be working on making their very own presentation.

Mrs. Nielsen



3rd grade - Last of the explorers to North America: John Cabot, Henry Hudson, and Samuel de Champlain.

4th grade - Alaska maps with Russia's history and Alaska's natural resources.

5th grade - Reconstruction after the Civil war.

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



3rd Grade Science: This week in Third Grade Science we looked into the wonderfully controlled chaos of the food chain and how animals and plants interact with each other and the nonliving things around them.

4th Grade Science: This week in Fourth Grade Science we looked into how our area gets its electricity and the renewable ways we can harvest electricity from our environment with windmills!

5th Grade Science: This week in Fifth Grade Science we took a deep dive into our science fair projects. **IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS:** We have sent out our letter about Science Fair info so if you have any questions about that please reach out to either Mrs. Heppner or Mr. Farring!

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



Middle School Art-Ventures with Ms. Christensen



6th grade "Polar Bear Portraits"

It's a 6th GRADE Thing

Sixth grade students are staying busy as we continue building skills across all subject areas and prepare for some exciting upcoming experiences!

Language Arts: Both Language Arts classes are focusing on grammar and poetry this week, strengthening writing skills while exploring creative expression. Students are also learning how to read and analyze bills as they prepare for our Juneau trip, which is right around the corner. These lessons are helping students make real-world connections to government and civic engagement.

Math: In math, Mrs. Zerkel's class worked on personal finance and inequalities, building practical skills alongside algebraic reasoning. Mr. Chadwell's class focused on inequalities, algebraic equations, and personal finance. Students are continuing to learn how math applies to everyday decision-making while strengthening problem-solving skills.



Social Studies: Students are continuing their study of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Through discussion and analysis, they are gaining a deeper understanding of the foundations of our government and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

As always, thank you for your continued support. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions as we head into this exciting stretch of the school year!

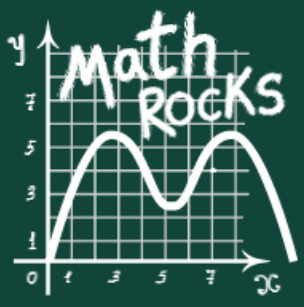
Mr. Chadwell and Mrs. Zerkel Jordan.Chadwell@matsuk12.us Katherine.Zerkel@matsuk12.us



This week, we continued strengthening our understanding of energy transformations. Students completed additional research and created their own energy transformation diagrams to show how energy changes from one form to another. We also practiced energy calculations and graphed our results to analyze the data.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeier Cynthia.Strohmeier@matsuk12.us



(Nearly) March greetings, 6th grade families! I am so proud of how hard my math students are working on their homework challenge. We have just until next week to hold our 100% turn-in streak, and we will have earned our movie day. Well done so far! This week we have been working through basic algebraic equations, learning to apply the inverse operation to isolate variables. Next week we plan to review and assess this chapter before (hopefully) watching a movie and eating popcorn on Wednesday. Keep up the good work!

Mrs. Heppner
Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us





7TH GRADE



Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Students are nearly finished with their books, *Two Old Women* and *Call of the Wild*. They've summarized scenes into plot diagrams and shown how the plot's causes are leading to effect within their main character's arc. They finished a plot diagram that causes a positive character arc for their own spin-off script and are writing an exposition/scene 1 due Monday.

Wright 7th math: The class finished Chapter 10's probability concepts this week. Instead of 10 ALEKS topics, they're completing the chapter review due Monday.

Wright 7th history: The class connected the causes of the Great Depression to the New Deal's programs. Students took notes on the various programs and chose one to create a study flashcard illustrating that program's elements. One of the programs, the Resettlement Act, resulted in the founding of Palmer. On Monday, DRIVERS ARE NEEDED for a trip to the Palmer museum's Matanuska Colony exhibit. Permission slips went home at the beginning of this week; each student needs \$5 for a museum donation.

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

Mrs. Wright
Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us

"Only those with tenacity can march forward in March." – Ernest Agyemang Yeboah

This week in English, students continued practice with our daily English skills in language, editing, and reading comprehension. They demonstrated their knowledge of vocabulary words with the roots "cede, ceed, cess" and their retention of the previous four weeks of words on a review test. They were assigned 10 more words with the roots "vers, vert." Please work with your students on their spelling and definitions each week to support success. Students finished viewing the 1930s version of All Quiet on the Western Front and began their five-paragraph opinion essay expressing which is better - the novel or the movie. They learned about the proper structure of an opinion essay and how to write an introduction paragraph that includes a hook, background, and a thesis statement. Students will begin composing their rough drafts next week. Students wrote about friendship for this week's journal entry, as well.

In Math, students continued to practice their fluency and finished Chapter 5, demonstrating knowledge of the skills covered and the chapter's targeted vocabulary. As a reminder, students can use their notebooks for support on the tests. However, if students don't enter the vocabulary with definitions and example problems, they must remember everything. Time is given in class for this, as well as assigned as homework. If the test scores are not where you would like, a look in their notebooks and a conversation might be warranted. They also began Chapter 6 on Equations and Inequalities, completing Lessons 1-3 (Solve One-Step Addition & Subtraction Equations, Multiplication & Division Equations, and Solve Equations with Rational Numbers). Students demonstrated understanding of Lessons 1-2 on formative assessments. 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 lessons in the **"Equations and Inequalities"** pie that connect to what we are working on in class using the workbook.

Students in History continued building geography skills, using atlases to identify answers to a variety of questions. We continued learning about the "Roaring Twenties." Students learned about the First Red Scare and the Palmer Raids; Presidents Harding and Coolidge and the corruption of the Teapot Dome scandal; John Scopes and the significance of the Scopes Monkey Trial, involving the theory of evolution; the fashion of the 1920s, flappers, "jive talk," and the dance craze of the Charleston; and the risky business of buying stocks on margin, resulting in the crash of 1929. Students also watched an episode of student-friendly current events.

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

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



What scientist in training we have at Academy! This week we finished up our study of Matter, elements, physical and chemical changes and States of Matter. The students studied chemical formulas and learned to identify the type and number of atoms in the formulas. They conducted experiments on the density of liquids. They completed a study guide and took the test! Next week we have only 45 minutes of science. We are going to learn the science behind "Elephant Toothpaste" and then create this fun and explosive substance!

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us

Middle School Spanish



Sixth graders are talking, writing and creating art about the weather in Spanish class. Sixth graders are working on producing quality, legible work for Spanish class. Ask your 6th grader to share the work they are producing and ask them if it reflects their best effort. They will be illustrating a traditional refrain over long break.

Seventh Graders are finishing this introduction to possessive adjectives with a test on Friday. They worked on pronunciation, speed and expression in Tongue Twister contests this week. Reagan's team took the gold in pronunciation while Aria's team had amazing expression.

Eighth graders conquered the mechanism of changing O to UE in Boot verbs. I am proud of them for working hard and making great gains all week. They enjoyed each other's boot verb presentations and practiced answering extemporaneous questions for the first time.

Spanish 1 created life changing skits which helped us all to burn emergency medical vocabulary into our brains. We are reviewing the differences between ser and estar and learning how Carneval is celebrated in Spanish speaking countries. Students are feeling emotional with their new vocabulary and creating Carneval themed emotions masks for our younger students to use.

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



The end of February is upon us, and Spring Break is just days away.

My 8th grade Math class has been hard at work on our geometry map projects that utilize concepts & angles related to parallel lines and transversals. 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 almost finished with Homer's *Odyssey* and their Harkness discussions are mind boggling! The students are also hard at work and the formulation of their Hero's Journey narratives.

This week the 8th graders spent a good deal of time working on their *We Didn't Start the Fire* projects which is always a class favorite! I can't wait to see their progress.

Have a nice weekend,

Mrs. Molina
Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us

Manley's Minute: English 1

This week we dove into a focused Grammar Boot Camp!

After practicing essential grammar tools, students have grown in their confidence and writing abilities. This week we looked at types of sentences, such as simple compound and complex; comma rules, after introductory phrases, within a series, with coordinating conjunctions, for added information, when addressing someone and within a date; and semi-colons, knowing where and how to use them. This boot camp has been a helpful reset and refresher for everyone as students will continue to use these grammar rules in their writing throughout the semester and beyond!

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



This week in Algebra 1 we finished up our look into radical functions and equations, and we will be starting our look into statistics next after spring break!



This week in 8th grade science we went back to amplify to look into natural selection and looked into what adaptive traits and non-adaptive traits are for individuals in changing environments.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us