

# JAMES MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Monthly Cat Tracks . March 2026

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## A Message from the Principal

Dear Families,

Spring is just around the corner, and with it comes a renewed sense of energy and focus in our classrooms. March is an important time of year as we encourage students to reflect on their progress and set goals for the remainder of the school year. March is also a time when we complete our state assessment, the Forward Exam, and strive to move into Spring Break on a positive note.

As we transition into the final stretch of the school year, please continue to check in regularly with your child about their assignments and overall well-being. Consistent routines at home, good attendance, and open communication all make a big difference.

We are grateful for your partnership and the many ways you support our school community. If you have questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Wishing you a wonderful month ahead and a happy start to spring!

Warm regards,

Poyee V. Xiong

Principal, James Madison Middle School

### *Coming Up!*

**Forward Testing:** Wisconsin students in Grades 6-8 will be participating in the Wisconsin Forward Exam this Spring. James Madison students are scheduled to take the Forward assessment between March 16, 2026 and April 24, 2026, **with the majority of our students testing on March 17, 18 and 19**. Students will also be testing a few days after spring break, with Grade 8 students needing to complete Social Studies and Science Assessments. Students will not be testing on all days during this testing window. There are designated days for each grade level to take specific portions of the overall state assessment. **Please ensure your student has a pair of working wired headphones for this assessment** and reach out if you need assistance with this. Please see the [attached Forward Letter here for more information](#).

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**School Yearbooks:** Don't forget to order your yearbook! [Order by March 10th for the discounted rate.](#) All information can be found below (scroll to the bottom). If you have any questions, please contact [huffmary@asd.k12.wi.us](mailto:huffmary@asd.k12.wi.us).

**Bus 84 (PM Route) has extended it's route:** Bus 84 will now cross over by Janet Berry in the PM and head down Midway toward Oneida. Check out the [route map here](#).

**Drop Off/Pick Up:** Please follow all traffic laws when dropping off/ picking up and be courteous to other drivers. Please [review this information about Drop off/Pick up](#) and Pg 34-36 in our [Parent/Student Handbook](#). When dropping off in the zone in front or back of school, pull forward when room, especially when in the drop off zone in the parking lot, to allow cars to pull in off of Calumet Street. Please remember to drop off near a curb in a drop off zone, do not drop off your student before stopping along the sidewalk near the bike racks/basketball hoops, as we have bus traffic in the other lane. The Grade 6 drop off zone in the back is NOT a pick up zone **after** school, as this is reserved for cabs and bus traffic only. Thank you for your understanding and helping in keeping staff and students safe!

### *Athletics & After-School Clubs*

**7th Grade Girls Volleyball will start March 9 and Track & Field will start March 16th.** All athletic paperwork needs to be turned in before the first practice in order to participate, which includes a hard copy of WIAA physical AND the JMMS online/electronic forms. Students interested should check the announcements to sign up.

1. Please click the link to the [JMMS Athletics Website](#)
  - o Make sure steps 1-3 are completed and sign up on the link under winter sports.

\*\*Online/electronic paperwork only needs to be completed 1x per year. Physicals are good for two years. If a physical expires in the middle of a season, the athlete will become ineligible. If you have any questions after reading the letter, please call Madison at 920-852-5425.

### *Attendance Information:*

Have you heard the words **chronic absenteeism**? If you have received a letter at home regarding chronic absenteeism, please know that we are simply looking at students who have missed 10% of the school year at this point. We know illnesses happen, please feel free to reach out to us at any time if we can help support your family. We appreciate your partnership with attendance!

One to two days absent per week does not seem like much, but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
<b>1 day every 2 weeks</b>	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
<b>1 day per week</b>	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years
<b>2 days per week</b>	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
<b>3 days per week</b>	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

### Questions about Attendance?

Contact Dave Nitka, Associate Principal, and/or take a look at the JMMS Attendance Procedures [here](#).

### School Climate News

**Wildcat Way Celebration:** Our next opportunity to celebrate students following the Wildcat Way by being respectful, responsible, and safe is **March 26th**. Look for more information coming from your student's team teachers.

**Internet Safety:** Throughout the month of March, Officer Lehrer, our School Resource Officer, will be giving grade level presentations on Internet Safety during a Target Time. Topics include cyberbullying, sextortion and overall safety tips around not sharing personal information and using your safe adults to report things that make you uncomfortable. As always, please reach out to the school office if you have questions or would like to discuss anything further.

### Family Engagement Opportunities:

Did you know? The AASD Board of Education has approved placing an operational referendum on the April 7, 2026, ballot. The referendum question will ask voters to approve \$15 million per year for four years to support:

- maintain existing programs and services and address the district's ongoing budget deficit
- a school counselor in every neighborhood school, every day, and a 50% increase in access to social workers, allowing students to receive help faster when facing mental health, family, or social challenges that are barriers to learning

The estimated tax rate impact for the four-year Operational Referendum is about \$15 per year on a \$100,000 home, or \$45 per year on the average Appleton area home (\$300,000).

[In this video, Superintendent Hartjes provides an in-depth explanation of how the district's financial crisis unfolded and outlines factors that led to growing deficits.](#) We also highlight the district's careful financial management over the past decade, including building reserves and paying down

debt early, and explain why a community referendum is now necessary to ensure the district can continue providing essential services and support for students.

### Ways to Learn About the April 7 Operational Referendum

- [Join us at a Referendum Information Session:](#) Open to all community members, our next in-person session is Thursday, March 12, 6:30 p.m. at Wilson Middle School in the Multipurpose Room
- [Visit the Referendum Webpage:](#) Access videos, FAQs, and submit your questions

### Madison Middle School Staff Shout Outs:

Is there a staff member who has been essentially helpful, supportive, positive etc. to you, your family, your child? Give them a shout out via this [Link!](#) Thank you for helping us recognize our staff!

### Reminders:

#### Reminder:

To support a focused and distraction-free learning environment, please ensure the following items are not brought to school or used during the school day:

- **Cell phones, earbuds, or headphones** are not allowed from bell to bell.
- **Stuffed animals and blankets** should remain at home.
- **Fidgets** that are going to cause a distraction to the student or clothes.
- **Outside drinks** (including drinks from Starbucks, Dunkin', Bubbler, Izze, etc...) are not allowed in classrooms. Water is allowed and should be in a container that has a twist top.
- Any drink brought in the morning **must be finished before the bell** and may not be taken into class.
- Each team has a **designated snack time**. Try to bring in a **healthy snack that is a single serving** and not a large bag of an item.

Thank you for your support in helping us maintain a positive and productive school environment.

### Useful Tools and Information:

- [Setting Canvas Notifications](#)
- [Classlink Sign-in Page](#)
- [Box Tops for Education](#)
- [Madison MS Home Page](#)
  - [Grading Guideline](#)
  - [Athletics & Co-curriculars](#)
- [Follow us Facebook](#)
- [Madison MS Parent Organization Page](#)
- [Madison Parent Handbook](#) -- can't find the information you are looking for? More than likely, it can be found in this!

### Important Dates:

- **March 27-April 6**
  - **Spring Break**
- **May 20**
  - **Family Food Truck Night**
- **May 22-May 25**
  - **No School**
- **June 5**
  - **Last day, 11:50am Dismissal**

# MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL ORDER A YEARBOOK TODAY!

**YEARBOOKS ARE ONLY \$22.00**  
**ORDER BY MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup> TO SAVE**



1. Scan QR code or go to [www.harman.com/ordering](http://www.harman.com/ordering)
2. For each school, enter event password:  
**MADMSYB**
3. Pay with a credit card.

If you do not have the ability to pay online, please call  
Harmann Studios at 1-800-236-8910 for other payment options.



**DISCOUNT REMOVED AFTER MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>**

*Harmann*  
STUDIOS

**NEW AND RETURNING FAMILIES JOIN US FOR:**

# **FAMILY & FOOD TRUCK NIGHT**



**WEDNESDAY, MAY 20 | 5PM-7PM**

**INFO BOOTHS | OPEN HOUSE | FOOD TRUCKS | GAMES**

**JAMES MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL**