



NEWSLETTER

August 14, 2026

Principal: Austin Grimes
<http://matsuk12.us/acc>

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Dear Academy Families,

A Wonderful Combination

Our first full week of school is complete, and what a wonderful week it was! I am extremely pleased with our team and the excellent outcomes that are already taking shape. Our students returned excited, engaged, and ready to learn, such a perfect combination!

Explicitly Teaching Procedures, Processes, and Expectations

For students to be successful, we carefully, purposefully, and explicitly teach Academy's procedures, processes, and expectations. We practice them consistently and hold students accountable, beginning with gentle reminders and redirection when needed.

Our schoolwide expectations are designed to promote safety and help all students focus, learn, and thrive. By clearly establishing these expectations and holding everyone accountable, we create an environment where students can participate in GREAT learning activities both inside and outside the classroom.

A HUGE Thank You! Together We Can! Together We Do!

A HUGE thank you to the many Academy families who joined us for our Parent Workday on Saturday, July 25th!

Together, we accomplished so much! The GaGa Ball pits and playground were weeded, furniture was moved into the correct areas, family squares were removed and retaped with names, bulletin boards were hung, tables were adjusted, classrooms and spaces were dusted and painted, and so much more!

We were able to complete every project on our list and even a few extra projects!

A very special thank you also goes to the Milazzo family for taking care of our landscaping throughout the summer and into the beginning of the school year. It was wonderful to see our students running and playing on a beautifully maintained lawn!

Together we can! Together we do!

Questions? Comments?

If you have any questions, concerns, or needs, please do not hesitate to reach out. You can call, stop by, email, or text. I care, and I want to help!

If you need anything, please don't hesitate to reach out.

With warm regards,

Austin Grimes
Principal
907-232-9756

Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us

	
Date:	Event:
8/18	Room Parent Meeting 8am
8/31-9/2	5 th Grade Denali Fieldtrip
	
9/6-10	8 th Grade Washington DC Fieldtrip, no school for 8 th grade 9/11
9/7	Labor Day Holiday-No School
9/8-10	7 th Grade Kennecott Fieldtrip, no school for 7 th grade 9/11
9/30	Fall Pictures





Kindergarten had a wonderful first week! The students have been working hard to learn our many routines and procedures, and they are already becoming quite good at following them. During our reading block, we learned that stories created from someone's imagination are called narratives, while texts that teach us information are called informatives. Our BEAR theme was a great way to practice this skill! The students learned how to tell the difference between brown bears and black bears. Our reading program is also helping us get ready to write by practicing the basic features of letters. We worked on tall, short, slanting, and horizontal lines while learning to hold our writing

tools correctly. The proper grip uses the thumb and middle finger as a "pincher," with the pointer finger resting on top of the writing instrument.

During our math block, we began counting toward the 100th day of school! We practiced recognizing numbers through 12, graphing data, and identifying shapes by counting their vertices and sides. The students have been such hard workers!

Permission slips for our trip to Reflection's Lake went home on Thursday. Thank you so much to all of the families who have already volunteered to drive and chaperone. We truly appreciate your support!

As always, please feel free to contact me anytime with questions or concerns!



Ms. Gerard

Rachael.Gerard@matsuk12.us



We have been reading some great books (*We Don't Eat our Classmates*, *Speak Up*, *Molly Lou Melon*, *Our Class is a Family*, *How Full is Your Bucket?*, *Make Way for Ducklings* and many Pete the Cat books) in between beginning-of-the-year assessments to show us what they know! I'm sure students are tired because they have been working HARD (with smiles)!

Along with enjoying two new math games, Garbage and Uncover 12, the class has gotten into the groove of Academy's expectations and first-grade routines. Your kiddos have been superstars!

Contact us anytime!

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond

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



What a wonderful first week! We have had such a great time getting to know each of our students and settling into our second-grade routines. It has been a busy and exciting week!

We have started reading *Charlotte's Web*, and we are really enjoying the story together. We have also been working hard and completing many assessments to help us learn what each student already knows and where we can best support their learning this year.

Thank you so much for all of your support as we get the school year underway! We are looking forward to a fantastic year together. As always, please reach out to us with any questions or concerns. We are always happy to hear from you!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer

Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us

Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us

Grade 3

The Glanville Weekly

What a fantastic first week of school! We've spent our time getting to know this wonderful group of 3rd graders and completing assessments. They have worked so hard; I can already tell it will be a great year!

We have finalized placements for Language Arts and Math classes. Please look for the placement paper coming home with your student today.

Starting Monday, we will dive into Unit 1: Classic Tales in Language Arts and begin Chapter 1 in our math books, reviewing place value concepts.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Mrs. Glanville
Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us

The Farring Files

We have had a great first week of the school year! I have loved getting to know our third graders as we worked on our beginning of the year assessments. Please be on the lookout for a paper coming home with their placement classes in the next few days.

Next week we will dive into our Language Arts and Math content. Students will also begin bringing home their Home Folders next week. Please help your child get into the routine of taking out and showing you their folder each night and packing it in their backpack for the next school day. This is a crucial factor in building their independence and responsibility this year!

Thank you for your support and partnership!

Mrs. Farring
Katherine.Karring@matsuk12.us

FOURTH GRADE

Nielsen's News:

Hello Families,

It's been a great week of testing! Your child has given their all and I am proud of each of them for their hard work. Slips come home today to let you know which teacher(s) your child will have for ELA and Math. Please know that your child will be challenged no matter what class they are in.

If your child has not brought a pencil box yet, please send those next week. Also, send a full water bottle every day. We do not have fountains in our classrooms, especially on Tuesdays for outdoor fitness.

Thank you for partnering with us to help your child have the best learning experience ever.

P.S. Homework will start next week: 30 minutes of reading, spelling, and fact fluency practice.

Mrs. Nielsen
Laurie.Nielson@matsuk12.us



Benbow's Buzz

- It has been great getting to know our class this week!
- Assessments have been completed, and we are ready to begin instruction on Monday! Placement letters were sent home today, and your child will begin lining up with their Language Arts teacher from the gym each morning. I am looking forward to jumping right into our regular routines and curriculum next week!
- Please continue to check the newsletter for news about our upcoming field trips to the Alaska Native Heritage Center and the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center. We appreciate all of our volunteer drivers /chaperones and hope that you know we couldn't do it without you!
- As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at cherie.benbow@matsuk12.us



5TH GRADE

Fabulous 5th Grade!

We've had a fantastic start to the school year! This week, we've completed our beginning of the year assessments, reviewed classroom procedures and school wide expectations as well as a few activities to get to know this incredible group of students. Starting Monday, we will begin our small group math instruction. These groups are designed to help every student learn and grow at their own pace. Placement slips were sent home on Friday.



The excitement is building for our upcoming adventure to Denali! Be on the lookout next week for our packing list and other important details about our upcoming trip! If you have any questions about what to bring or any other trip-related details, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Mrs. Sturgis, Mrs. Manley, and Mr. Schumacher

Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us



4th and 5th Grade Cross Country

Permission slips were sent home, or they are available at the front office.

- First Practice will be Tuesday, August 18th, from 2:45 to 4:00pm
- Practices will be Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2:45pm to 4:00pm
- Open to grades 4-5

➤ Meet is Sept 30 @ PHS from 12-7

Outdoor Fitness

We had a good first week in fitness class. Special thanks to Mr. Bohan and Mrs. Wagoner who helped biking students during the sixth-grade field trip on the railroad grade.

If you have a weed whacker or tall grass mower, the trails in the loop need work. Fourth graders packed down the grass on trails and pulled lots of weeds, but the strength of a few adults would make a huge difference.

Grades 6-8 will be earning grades for fitness class this year. Eighth graders have the chance to earn high school credit. Attendance, individual/group participation effort, being prepared with appropriate clothing/gear, and striving to meet expectations will be the basis for their grade. Missing class due to injuries, illness/health, and sports events will be excused. Make-up exercise can be arranged with the teachers for unexcused absences.

Helmets brought from home are a terrific help for class flow when we bike. Bikes from home need to shift and have functioning brakes on the front and rear wheels for the safety of the rider and the rest of the class on the trails.

Mr. Schumacher and Mrs. Nichols

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



K-5 Lab Classes



In art, we were so excited to work with the second and first graders and the brand-new kindergarteners!

In kindergarten, we did a small assessment to see how our new students could cut, color, hold a pencil, and glue.

In first grade, we learned about drawing a face while we drew a self-portrait. This is part of our unit about types of paintings: portraits, landscapes, and still life.

In second grade, we also drew a self-portrait with a frame showing our interests. Everyone worked very hard!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Glanville



Kindergarten, first grade and second grade began their geography rotations with an introduction/review of what geography, continents, and oceans are as well as expectations and routines.

Every student will complete an exit ticket at the end of the lab, and it goes towards the class grade. If your child is absent, we will send that exit ticket home.

They should've received a small pink paper titled, "Some Tidbits about Geography," to explain it all.

Mrs. Mayer and Mrs. Drummond



Español with Señorita Catarina

Third, Fourth and Fifth graders started their rotation in Spanish lab going over expectations, learning our new students Spanish names and greeting them and revamping their notebooks for the new school year.

We will be learning about the beautiful country of Honduras and going over our new alfabeto and other reference materials on the walls in the Spanish classroom.



Third, Fourth, and Fifth grades had a great first week making their own charters for our class.

GRADING:

- 1- Be Present: Attendance is key for success in Technology class
- 2- Digital Citizenship: Be smart, safe, and kind
- 3- Knowledge and Innovation: Learn, create, and problem solve
- 4- Above and Beyond: Help a friend

My expectation is that each child is aiming to earn at least a 3 and then sometimes a 4. Ask your child what he earned today!

Mrs. Nielsen



Kinder: This week in kinder science we explored our science tools and spent a lot of time in our warm and toasty outdoor classroom!

First: This week in First grade we reviewed our science tools and then started to talk about Plant and Animal defenses!

Second: This week in Second grade Science we passed out their handy dandy science notebooks, and we put our first page in those notebooks exploring and taking scientific notes in our outdoor classroom!

Mr. and Mrs. Farring

katherine.farring@matsuk12.us
timothy.farring@matsuk12.us



We enjoyed getting to see all of the third, fourth, and fifth graders this week! This week the students worked on building sentences with Who? What? Why?, and How?, and did some whole group paragraph editing. They also wrote a paragraph about how they felt about going back to school. Fourth and fifth grades covered the four types of sentences and began a plan for writing a paragraph about a place they have visited.

Mrs. Sturgis and Ms. Benbow



Middle School Spanish

Sixth, Seventh and Eighth graders all received their syllabi and their Academic Integrity Policies this week. They went over routines and expectations in Spanish Class. They discussed record keeping and accountability and strategies to have their most successful year learning language yet!

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



🏛️ An Exciting Start in 6th Grade! 🏛️

It has been an exciting week in 6th grade as we kicked off the school year with our **Ancient Greece Unit!**

On **Tuesday**, we continued one of our favorite 6th-grade traditions—our **hike down to the river!** We couldn't have asked for better weather, and everyone had a blast enjoying the beautiful day together. A huge **thank you to the parents who were able to join us** and help make the hike such a fun and memorable experience for our students!

In **Language Arts**, students have jumped into the action-packed *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*. They are also working together within their Greek city-states—**Argos, Athens, Corinth, and Sparta**—to earn points through classroom activities and challenges. We can't wait to see which city-state will rise to victory!

In **Math**, we have spent the week reviewing and practicing **mean, median, mode, and range**. We also completed beginning-of-the-year assessments to help us determine the best instructional groupings and ensure students are appropriately challenged and supported.

In **Social Studies**, students are beginning their deep dive into all things **Ancient Greece**, learning about the people, culture, government, and ideas that helped shape the ancient world.

Looking ahead to next week: Students will be placed into their appropriate **Language Arts and Math classes**, and we will begin settling into our regular academic schedule and routines. If you have questions about your student's placement, please let us know.

We are off to a fantastic start and are looking forward to a great year with this group of 6th graders! As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs. Zerkel and Mr. Chadwell

Katherine.Zerkel@matsuk12.us Jordan.Chadwell@matsuk12.us



It was a great first week of school! We jumped right into science class by setting up our science notebooks, discussing class expectations, and completing a fun observation lab using M&Ms. I'm excited to dive into our Geological Processes unit next week! Have a fantastic weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeier Cindy.Strohmeier@matsuk12.us

I'm so excited to be back with these scientists as 7th graders this year!



We jumped right in by reviewing lab safety and classroom procedures and taking some notes on different types of observations. We then put those skills into practice with a fun mini observation lab using M&Ms. Next week, we'll get started exploring science in Kennecott!

Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeier cynthia.strohmeier@matsuk12.us

Wrights Winners!

It was a busy week in 7th grade as we got to know students and assessed their academic progress. To that end, Ms. Twohy and I swapped our two groups multiple times each day, conducting group work, individual assessments, games and history lessons. They did stations on the five strands of history and spent time synthesizing, comparing and summarizing their work for the whole class. They practiced line behavior and fire drill line ups, as well as their daily schedule changes.

Our goal is to meet every student where they are, and to place them so they'll be challenged and grow. On Monday, they'll learn their placements and we'll be off to the races! Next week, look for guardian notifications from Classroom and a chance to sign up for weekly Friday progress emails.

Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Wright Mary.Wright@matsuk12.us



"A new school year means new beginnings, new adventures, new friendships, and new challenges. The slate is clean, and anything can happen." — Denise Witmer

This week marked the start of our 7th-grade year! We are all transitioning to the routines and procedures that accompany life at school. Students enjoyed reconnecting with those who returned to ACS and began building friendships with the new students joining us this year. They demonstrated skills in English and math, brushing off the cobwebs of summer in their brains. Students conducted interviews with a partner about a memorable life story and then composed a narrative that was used as a writing assessment. Over the week, the class completed multiple assessments that helped guide their placement in classes to serve their needs best.

In History, students began thinking like detectives to make inferences, using artifacts and primary sources. We reviewed how history is shared, what life was like in 1750 vs. now, the cause-and-effect relationships surrounding the American Revolution, and westward expansion. Next week, we will continue laying out the foundation for our study of the Industrial Revolution and preparation for our field trip to Kennebec.

It's been a pleasure getting to know the students, and I look forward to our 7th-grade learning adventure together!

Mrs. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Welcome to the 2026-27 school year! We have a fabulous group in 8th grade this year & I'm looking forward to the year ahead!

I'd like to welcome two new students and their families to our class. Please welcome Sonora & Roselynn! We hope you love being part of the Academy family as much as we do!

This week we have been super busy getting to know each other, learning the 8th grade expectations & routines and working on assessments that will help us (the entire 8th grade teaching team) make sure your child is placed in classes that will provide the best possible education. Students are bringing home letters with their English I & Math placements for the year.

In addition to a series of assessments, we also began our Spanish, Science & History classes. We've also started discussing our Washington D.C. tour to include expectations, sites that we will be visiting and the overall schedule.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs. Molina Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us



This week in Algebra 1 we took a lot of placement tests to see where everyone should be, we will begin instruction on Monday!

Mr. Farring Tim.Farring@matsuk12.us



This week in science we went over the basics for the year and talked about a little bit of everything, I am very excited to hit the ground running on Monday!

Mr. Farring Tim.Farring@matsuk12.us