



NEWSLETTER

August 21, 2026

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

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

Dear Academy Families,

Thank You!

A huge thank you to Rebecca Moffitt and Jessica Anderson for stepping up each morning to open car doors and help students cross safely into the building. Your support makes a big difference, and we truly appreciate you!

Another big thank you goes to the Freeman/Delles family for painting the picnic tables. We also want to thank Mr. Carl Jones, the Henneman family, the Katkus/Gerard family, and Mr. Ron Mistler for helping finish the metal siding on the back building. It is a relief to know that building will now be protected from the elements.

A special thank you to the Haggerty family for helping contain and remove the weeds from our playground areas. Your hard work is greatly appreciated, and we are thankful for your help in keeping our campus looking great!

High Expectations and Strong Instruction

At Academy, we carefully and purposefully create an environment and culture of high expectations. We hold to those standards across all grade levels, and our motto of "Work Hard, Play Hard" is a theme throughout our school.

The first full week of school was dedicated to carefully and purposefully assessing students in grades K-8. I am always impressed by the thoughtful and intentional analysis of the 10-12 assessment scores we use to measure readiness and mastery in math.

These scores, combined with each student's pace of learning, guide our team in making thoughtful placements into the appropriate groups. Every group is dynamic and moves at a fast pace, with each teacher delivering powerful instruction.

The combination of small math groups and outstanding teachers results in truly impressive learning experiences!

Cross Country

A HUGE thank you to Coach Craig and Coach Hegge for coaching our elementary cross-country team, and to Coach Zerkel and Coach Strohmeier for coaching our middle school cross-country team!

Our coaches have once again stepped up as volunteers to coach Academy's cross-country teams. They are already implementing carefully crafted plans to get our runners into top shape. It is rewarding to see our students excel not only academically but in all aspects of their lives!

Questions? Concerns? Needs? Please don't hesitate to call, come in, text, or email if you have any questions, needs, or concerns.

We care, and I care! We can fix most issues if we know about them early, so please reach out. We are always happy to listen and help!

With Warm Regards,
Austin Grimes
Principal
907-232-9756
Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us



	
Date:	Event:
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



- If you have a weed whacker or tall grass mower, the trails in the loop and the trails in the woods need work.
- Looking for someone to clean the back buildings once a week. Can be after school or weekends!



Kindergarten continued their BEAR adventure this week! We began learning about setting and characters as important parts of a narrative. During our reading block, we also started practicing how to break single-syllable words into individual sounds.

We continued working on letter formation, focusing on making circles that begin at the 2 o'clock position. Consistently practicing this skill will make forming eight lowercase letters and three single-digit numbers much easier and more accurate.

Our BEAR Paw Notes are making their way across our classroom! I was so excited to see that nearly every family participated in the homework of reading at home. Thank you for supporting your child's learning!

During our math block, we worked on correct number formation, graphing, tally marks, and bar graphs. We also had our first challenge to see how high we could count and write using numbers. The students learned two new math games to help reinforce the concepts we are learning in class.

A huge THANK YOU to all of our wonderful volunteers who have volunteered to help with our field trip to Reflection Lake. Just as a reminder, all students need to have a booster seat to attend our field trip. I truly appreciate everyone who volunteered for the other classroom jobs as well. Your time, support, and willingness to help make such a difference in our classroom. We appreciate you!

As always, please feel free to reach out to me anytime with questions or concerns. Thank you for a wonderful week!

Ms. Gerard Rachael.Gerard@matsuk12.us



We have been spending a lot of time establishing our Spalding routines with review of sounds and letter formations, and they are doing GREAT!

Math groups are up and running as we explore numbers in all variations with multiple games and activities.

Permission slips for our Sutton Library field trip are in folders! ☺ PLEASE NOTE THE DATE CHANGE: SEPTEMBER 8TH.

Contact us anytime!

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond

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



What a wonderful week in second grade! We have been busy learning, growing, and having lots of fun together! This is such a great group of kids, and we are already so excited to watch them learn, grow, and become more confident each day.

We have been learning the routines and expectations for our Math and Language Arts classes and are doing a fantastic job settling into our school routines. In Math, we have been reviewing addition strategies and practicing different ways to solve problems.

We are also continuing to enjoy Charlotte's Web together! The students are loving the story and are doing a great job listening, discussing, and sharing their thoughts.

And, of course, learning isn't always done inside the classroom! We had a wonderful time picking currants for Jam Day and harvesting peas from our garden. These hands-on experiences are always a favorite!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer

Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us

Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us



Grade 3

The Farring Files

We have had another great week in third grade!

We spent our first official week split into our Language Arts and Reading classes. In Reading class, we have enjoyed reading through the first chapters of the classic tale, "The Wind in the Willows."

In Math this week, we have been working on identifying and evaluating each place value within multi-digit numbers. We are now using those skills to help us compare the values of two or more large numbers.

Please help your child get into the daily routine of bringing home their Home Folder as well as reading out loud for about 30 minutes.

As always, thank you for your partnership and support!

Mrs. Farring Katherine.Karring@matsuk12.us



The Glanville Weekly

Language Arts: This week, we dove right into Unit 1 on classic tales! We read the first few chapters of *The Wind in the Willows* and discussed the different elements of a story. Students added characters to their notebooks and practiced sequencing events, identifying perspective and dialogue, and exploring the story's themes and how they relate to the characters.

Students also read stories about Sir Gus and King Arthur and answered questions using evidence from the text. In addition, we reviewed all 70 phonograms, their sounds, and proper handwriting. Next week, we will begin adding words to our Spalding notebooks and take our first spelling test on Friday.

Math: In math, we have been reviewing place value and comparing numbers. We also began rounding numbers to the nearest ten. The students are working hard, and we are settling into a great math groove! I am excited to watch their confidence in mathematics grow throughout the year. Students also worked on completing topics to fill their ALEKS pies!

Mrs. Glanville

Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Nielsen's News:

What a great first week in our ELA and Math classes! We jumped right into our first units with eager excitement for learning.

ELA- This week we did a ton of learning!

- Grammar: review of nouns & adjectives
- Spalding: phonogram & rules review
- Novel study: Because of Winn Dixie- discussing character traits, figurative language, and summarizing
- Writing: What is a personal narrative, practice writing memory paragraphs

*Spelling homework comes home today!

Math- This has been a week of review and refreshing our brains; as well as building our vocabulary.

Place value: digits, place value vs. value of the digit, periods, standard, expanded and written form, and compare and contrast values.

They are also working very hard at brushing up on multiplication.

Math homework is coming home today! 3 minutes, 4 days a week, short and sweet!

Mrs. Nielsen Laurie.Nielson@matsuk12.us



Benbow's Buzz

Upcoming 4th grade field trip! We have the date for our field trip to The Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center: Wednesday, September 30. We will leave the school by 8:20 with a goal of returning to the school by 2:00. Because this is a driving trip, we are sending notice out in plenty of time to arrange days off if needed. Please watch for the permission slip to come home and return it promptly to ensure that everything goes as smoothly as possible!

Do keep in mind that school policy does not allow for siblings to attend our field trips.

Language Arts - We took full advantage of our first week together to jump into our classroom routines. This includes Daily Sentence Writing, Daily Language Review, Spalding lessons, and time for writing projects and oral reading. We began our unit on Personal Narratives this week and will spend the next few weeks writing a variety of paragraphs that will provide practice toward writing descriptive and engaging narratives. We are reading *The War with Grandpa*, and pausing to note figurative language, sentence structure and variety, and character descriptions. During lunch, we are reading *Treasure Island*, which begins at the Admiral Benbow Inn!

Math - We spent this week beginning to create our math notebooks. The first few pages include problem solving strategies, order of operations, the 4th grade math standards and vocabulary for our first unit. Once those pages were completed, we began reviewing Place Value and Number Sense. Automatic recall of the basic multiplication facts is vital to success in fourth grade math. Although we will 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.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at cherie.benbow@matsuk12.us



5TH GRADE



5th Grade Language Arts

What a busy, but delightful week! Fifth grade has kicked off this year's Spalding instruction. We split the class into two groups and did a good introduction/review of the basics of Spalding spelling and writing. As this is just an introduction, spelling lists will not be sent home until after the students complete MAP testing and are split into their Language Arts groups.

Our main goal this week is to begin preparing the students for Denali. The class began working on the activities to earn a Jr. Ranger Badge, and explored the wildlife and sled dogs of Denali. We will continue to explore many different aspects of Denali National Park during Language Arts next week.

Sturgis Super Students!

Math: Students kicked off this week with a review of place value by creating a place value chart which will be used for a game called "Place Wars." The class also began creating a math game book.

We will add math games to this book through the year to give students plenty of fun opportunities to review math skills. This week's games included activities to review multiples, and games to review and strengthen basic math facts.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us

The Manley Minute:

Math: We've had a great start to 5th grade math! This week, we began Chapter 1 on Place Value and explored how to read and write numbers through the millions in standard, expanded, and word form. This year, students will be encouraged to "talk like a mathematician" by using precise mathematical vocabulary when explaining their thinking, solving problems, and discussing strategies. Our vocabulary terms this week included *digit* and *period*. Ask your student what these terms mean!

We've also begun working on our ALEKS topics. Students are encouraged to complete 10 topics each week. These can be completed at school or at home. Please remember that all Knowledge Checks must be completed at school. It is a joy being part of your child's education.

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

SCHUMACHER MATH

We had a good first week in math class.

Students worked on a DaVinci bridge challenge and a slide project. We had lessons and practiced with GCF & LCM. Students learned how their grade weights work in StudentVue. It's no surprise to parents, but one low score really hurts your grade.

Watch for the Take-Home-and-Bring-Back folder, it'll transport homework papers.

Mr. Schumacher
Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us



Outdoor Fitness

Grades 6-8 did well earning grades for fitness class this week. Most students remembered a fitness outfit and all of them wore good shoes or boots. Participation levels were excellent. Students who miss class due to injuries, illness/health, and sports events will be excused. Make-up exercise is being created for unexcused absences so grades will be acceptable.

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

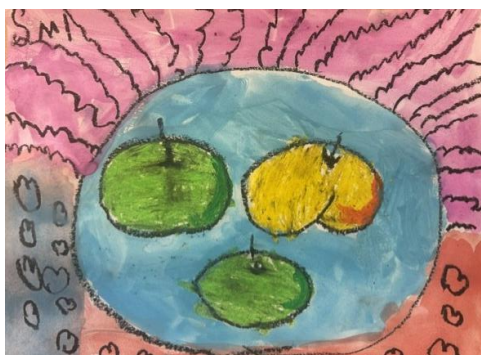


Kindergarten continued exploring lines and colors. Students drew many different types of lines, colored them in the colors of the rainbow, and created self-portraits featuring crazy hairstyles made from a variety of lines!

First grade learned about landscapes and perspective. We discussed how objects appear smaller as they get farther away. Students created their own landscape drawings and also began working on still-life compositions.

Second grade put their architectural skills to work by designing their very own castles!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Glanville



Español with Señorita Catarina

Third, fourth and fifth graders have been introduced to the new Spanish Alphabet line on the wall, reviewing Spanish sounds and taking dictation of Spanish words. All students have enjoyed a glimpse into the beautiful country of Honduras.



Third- Digital Citizenship topics: Rings of Responsibility, Privacy Doors

Fourth- Digital Citizenship topic: Personally Identifiable Info., Communicating Clearly Online

Fifth- Digital Citizenship topic: Creating Device-Free Moments, Evaluating a Website- Mrs. Nielsen



The upper elementary students spent the week practicing writing different types of sentences and correcting sentence fragments. They put their sentence writing skills together by turning the plan they created about a place they visited into a paragraph.

It has been fun to hear them recall their experiences and put them down on paper. -Mrs. Sturgis and Ms. Benbow



Kinder Science: This week in Kinder Science we kept working through our 5 senses exploring the senses of taste, touch, smelling, and lastly today hearing! Be sure to ask your kindergartener which parts of the body are responsible for each of our 5 senses!

First Grade: This week with First Grade Science we took a look into the defenses that plants and animals have. Taking a look at spikes, spines, shells, and camouflage!

Second Grade: This week in Second Grade Science we took a look at the relationships plants and animals have, more specifically how animals can help plants disperse their seeds. We also looked at plant seeds and how they're shaped and talked about why each one is different and why that may be.

Mr. and Mrs. Farring

katherine.farring@matsuk12.us

timothy.farring@matsuk12.us



Kindergarten: Continents, oceans, cardinal directions & exposure to Asia and Africa

1st grade: Map skills and North America with its countries

2nd grade: Focus on Mexico, Central America & South America

Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Davenport



Middle School Spanish

Sixth graders received their first vocabulary lists - Meeting and Greeting. They discussed Spanish speakers in the world today and how learning another language helps in all realms. They made some great posters, and this week will work on their first flashcards.

Seventh graders are learning about adjectives! They are learning how to use them and how they are different in Spanish and English. Their first vocabulary list contains adjectives, and their first project is an adjective rich poster about their best friend. Seventh graders are working with Choice Boards this year in Spanish Class. **Seventh grade Choice Boards are due every FRIDAY.**

Both eighth grade classes are reviewing grammar concepts and working with clothing vocabulary. They are dipping their toes back into the Spanish pool with cognate rich readings and showing me their baselines for listening and writing in Spanish. Eighth graders are working with Choice Boards this year in Spanish Class. **Eighth grade Choice Boards are due every THURSDAY.**

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us

Middle School Art-Ventures with Ms. Christensen

Welcome back! We are delving into using organic and geometric lines and forms in our first artwork of this school year. Students are drawing organic subjects, like trees, using geometric lines and shapes with thick and thin lines for emphasis.

Sixth grade is using dry watercolor pigments to add color to their pen-and-ink "Geome-trees", giving their compositions bursts of color.

Seventh grade is drawing a mountain landscape with geometric lines and shapes, inspired by American artist Elyse Dodge.



- Middle School Cross Country Athletes: We will practice on the race trails at Palmer High School right after school. Please bring your student to Palmer High (the poolside parking lot) or arrange to carpool. Practice will end at 4 pm.
- Our first meet is Wednesday the 26th. Students need to be at Palmer High at 2:15 pm to get their bibs and warm up as a team. The races begin at 3 pm. Our uniforms are not in yet, so please have your students wear their Academy T-shirts. If they do not have one, please let the coaches know ASAP.



It has been another busy and exciting week in 6th grade! Students are settling into their Language Arts and Math groups and have been working hard as we continue our Ancient Greece unit.

In **Language Arts**, both classes are enjoying *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*. Mrs. Zerkel's class has been exploring Greek mythology by creating **Greek family trees**, while Mr. Chadwell's class is bringing the story to life by designing **Hero's Journey storyboards**.

In **Math**, Mrs. Zerkel's class is mastering **greatest common factor (GCF)**, **least common multiple (LCM)**, and **rates**, while Mr. Chadwell's class is building a strong foundation in **statistics**, including mean, median, mode, range, and graphing.

In **Social Studies**, students continue their deep dive into **Ancient Greece**, learning about its history, culture, mythology, and lasting influence on the world today.

We are so proud of the hard work and enthusiasm our 6th graders are showing as they continue to grow and learn. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out. We appreciate your continued support!

Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Zerkel and Mr. Chadwell

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



This week, we launched our Geological Processes unit by exploring an important question: What factors should we consider when choosing a site to store nuclear waste? As the unit progresses, students will investigate several key considerations, including natural hazards and the Earth processes that cause them. Ultimately, they will apply their new understanding of Earth's processes to develop an informed recommendation for a nuclear waste storage site.

Mrs. Strohmeier Cindy.Strohmeier@matsuk12.us

This week was the official beginning, and we are working on establishing routines and procedures and how to meet expectations in all classes. Students in English and History began the process of creating our class Social Contract. This will serve as our agreement of expected behaviors when we are together.

In English, we start the class with skill-building by practicing daily language review, paragraph editing, and reading comprehension. Students are learning the definitions of this week's ten vocabulary words with the root "ped" and their meanings. Next Tuesday, students will have their first assessments covering their meanings and how to spell them and will be given ten more words to learn. Students also completed their first writing entry in their notebooks on the topic of courage and confidence. Each Wednesday, students are assigned a new prompt for an entry. These activities are all constant, occurring every week. In addition to our daily and weekly work, students read, annotated, demonstrated comprehension of the first reading, completed a second reading with guided annotation, and discussed Langston Hughes's short story, "Thank You, M'am".

In Math, students begin each class with timed multiplication and division to build math fluency. We also complete daily math practice, targeting various spiraling skills. We started our first chapter (Chapter 3) working with integers and covered Lessons 1-2 (integers and absolute value and adding integers). Students demonstrated their understanding of both lessons on quizzes. These serve as a quick check to determine if reteaching and/or more practice is needed. As a reminder, students should be engaged with ALEKS, mastering at least 10 topics a week, mainly as homework. Please encourage them to choose lessons that reinforce the skills we are working on in class.

History students used atlases to answer nine given questions, learning how to read various types of maps and charts, while building atlas skills and geographical awareness. Answers are recorded in their composition notebooks and will serve as support for future assessments. Students learned more about what history is and why it's important to study it. They also began answering the question of why the Industrial Revolution began in Britain; learning about the six components required for industrialization to occur; and what industrial Alaska had in common with Britain, building the connection to Kennecott Mine.

Each day the agenda (a "To-Do" list) is posted in Google Classroom. Ask your child to share it with you! It provides insight into what was accomplished and assigned each day, helping to support both student and parent. If there are questions, concerns, or needs, please don't hesitate to communicate with me.

Together, this will be a great year!

Mrs. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Our first week of classes draws to a close and students are knee deep in informational text. They took notes on types of informational text and organizational structure. They practiced identifying each type and giving evidence on why that categorization was correct. They learned about text features and used that knowledge to adapt an article into an infographic. All their work is preparation for their upcoming Kennecott project.

Wright 7th math: Our first chapter on problem solving strategies is almost half-way finished. Students are adjusting to the expectations and pace of the class. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday.

Wright 7th history: Students dove into their first unit on the Industrial Revolution with an American history review on the Monroe Doctrine and how imperialism will shape their studies this year. They also began researching prominent industrialists, which leads into next week's focus on the new millionaire class.

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

Mrs. Wright

Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us



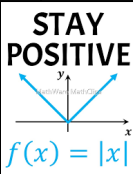
We welcomed Mrs. Dunham this week to help us prepare for our Kennecott trip. She spent Tuesday discussing the element copper, including what it is, its properties, and its role in the Kennecott Mine. Thursday was dedicated to glaciology. Students learned how glaciers form, as well as the names of glacier features. Thank you, Mrs. Dunham, for sharing your wealth of knowledge!

Mrs. Strohmeyer cynthia.strohmeyer@matsuk12.us



Maciel's Math Masters

Our class got off to a wonderful start this week, with students arriving ready to learn! We jumped right into absolute value and explored its applications. Students discovered that a number line can be a helpful tool when adding and subtracting positive and negative integers. Next week, we will begin working on multiplication and division of integers. We will also review fact fluency most days in class, as these skills will be important throughout the year!



Mrs. Maciel Ashleigh.Maciel@matsuk12.us



The second week of the 2026-26 school year is in the books: with our Beginning of the Year assessments are complete and the students are settling into classes. We are grateful to be getting into our regular routine before we head off to Washington D.C. in a few weeks.

Speaking of our Washington D.C. tour, we spent time learning about numerous elements of our tour and about tour expectations. On Friday, we took a dive into all things Washington D.C., including an in-depth look at our itinerary. All trip details will continue to be posted in Google classroom.



This week in Civics (Yes- all 8th grade students will have the opportunity to earn the 1/2 credit Civics course that is required in high school!!) we learned about our 4th through 6th Presidents, virtually explored the National Mall, and discussed so many other elements that are interwoven into our nation's history and our government.

Honor English 1 kicked off the week discussing our course syllabus before we launched into George Orwell's classic work, *Animal Farm*. This satirical piece speaks to the perils of communism through this fairy story. I am excited to take this deep dive into such a great piece of literature!

Have a fantastic weekend,
Mrs. Molina
Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us



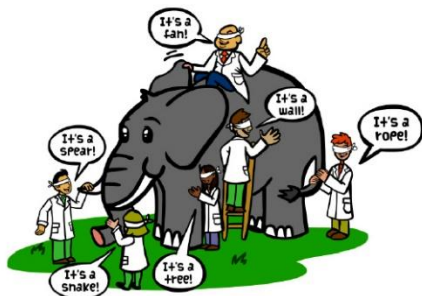
Manley's Minute: English 1

It has been a wonderful week in English !!

This week, we began reading *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne. As we read, students are getting to know the characters and setting of the novel and have already made a couple predictions regarding the direction of the novel. To help us better understand the historical setting of the novel, we also read a paired informational passage about Auschwitz.

We also read John Godfrey Saxe's poem "The Blind Men and the Elephant." This poem provided an opportunity to think about perspective and how our individual experiences can shape the way we understand the world. As a class, we also discussed how different people can encounter the same situation yet come away with very different understandings. They have made some great connections with the novel in week one!

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



Oh, what a week it has been! We hit the ground running and haven't looked back! This crew is doing a great job working their way through the curriculum and we ended this week with our mid chapter quiz.



Despite some minor setbacks this week we kept cruising through our unit on force and motion. We talked about balanced and unbalanced forces as well as how to calculate the force (in newtons) or kinetic energy (in Joules) that an object has! We will be putting this knowledge to the test next week with our labs!

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us