



NEWSLETTER

September 4, 2026

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

Phone: 907-746-2358
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Dear Academy Families,

I want to take a moment to share something that is at the heart of what makes Academy special: the why behind our field trips.

When families choose Academy, they are choosing an educational experience that extends beyond the traditional classroom. Our charter calls for us to "immerse students in applying content, skills, and knowledge." These experiences are designed to expand students' perspectives and significantly deepen their understanding.

That is exactly why our field trips matter.

Our field trips are not simply days away from school or opportunities to have fun. They are an extension of our classrooms and an important part of our learning. Our teachers intentionally connect these experiences to curriculum and give students opportunities to apply what they have learned in real-world settings.

For example, when our students travel to Kennecott, they are not simply visiting a historic site. They are stepping into Alaska's history and experiencing firsthand the story of the Kennecott mines, the people who lived and worked there, and the challenges of building a community and industry in such a remote part of our state. History, geography, science, and economics become much more meaningful when students can see and experience what they have studied.

This is part of the vision families chose when they chose Academy. Experiential learning is not an extra we add when we have the time. This is part of our charter and the educational experience we are committed to providing our students.

We know field trips take planning, resources, and support from our families and staff. But we believe the opportunity to experience learning firsthand is incredibly valuable. We believe students should not only learn about the world. They should have opportunities to experience it.

Thank you for choosing Academy, for trusting us with your children, and for supporting the unique educational experiences that make our school special. We are proud to provide our students with opportunities to immerse themselves in their learning, broaden their perspectives, and deepen their understanding in ways only real-world experiences can.

With appreciation,

Austin Grimes
Principal
907-232-9756

Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us



Date:	Event:
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)
9/8-10	MAP Testing, Grade 5
9/30	Fall Pictures



Elementary Cross Country

Meet Schedule:

Thursday, September 17th

Knight Invite at Colony High School

Girl's race starts at 5:30pm,
Boys race at 6:00pm

Wednesday, September 30th

District meet at Palmer High School

First race begins at 3:00pm.



This week, kindergarten students began learning letter sounds. So far, we have focused on the sounds associated with the lowercase letters o, c, and a. Combined there are 8 sounds. Students are beginning to make connections between letters, their sounds, and how they are formed when writing. We have also been reviewing lowercase letters a–z, discussing how letters differ in their shapes and where they are positioned on the writing line.

To support proper writing posture and comfort, we introduced “foot books” for students whose feet do not comfortably reach the floor while seated at their tables. Providing this support helps students maintain a stable and appropriate sitting position, which can improve their comfort, focus, and handwriting posture.

Students are also continuing to build their reading and writing stamina each day. They are practicing staying engaged with books and writing activities for increasingly longer periods of time.

In literacy, we continued our stories while learning about different types of trees. Students were introduced to important narrative elements, including setting and characters. As you read together at home, encourage your child to identify where a story takes place and who is in the story .

During our math block, students practiced creating, identifying, extending, and labeling a variety of patterns. Some of the most common patterns we explored were AB, AAB, and AABB patterns. We also incorporated double dice-based activities, including roll-and-write games, to strengthen number recognition and mathematical thinking. Students enjoyed learning a new math games, called “Bump It.”

Thank you for continuing to support your child’s learning at home. Reading together, practicing letters and sounds, and talking about patterns in everyday life are wonderful ways to reinforce the skills we are developing in the classroom.



Ms. Gerard Rachael.Gerard@matsuk12.us



SPELLING TESTS WILL NOT BE COMING HOME OR BE GRADED until AFTER November conferences! 😊

1. Watch the spelling practice video on Facebook (Friday, 9/4)
2. First spelling practice coming home, 9/4
3. Practice papers do NOT need to return to school
4. First spelling TEST, 9/11
5. We will be tracking spelling test scores ...
6. And will then share the collected data at the November conferences as well as discuss spelling goals
7. Of course you can reach out before then if you’re curious! 😊



Happy spelling!

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



Another great week in second grade! We have officially survived our **first MAP testing session**, and we could not be more proud of our students! They worked hard, persevered, and gave it their best effort. We know testing can be tiring, and they did a fantastic job!

We also had another wonderful opportunity to learn outside the classroom. We spent some time in our **garden harvesting potatoes, carrots, and rhubarb**. The students loved getting their hands in the dirt and seeing the results of all the hard work that has gone into our garden!

Next week on Tuesday the 8th is **Honey Day!** 🍯 🐝 We are so excited for another hands-on learning experience with our students. If you are interested in volunteering to help with Honey Day, please get in touch with us. We would love to have you join us!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer

Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us

Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us





Grade 3



The Farring Files

Students worked hard to show what they know on their three MAP tests this week! We are excited to use this information to see how much they grow this school year.

Reading: We are continuing to read through "The Wind in the Willows," and students remained amazed as the events unfold in our story! We are analyzing the four main themes in our story to help us outline our first writing piece.

Math: We have been learning and practicing various strategies to solve multi-digit addition equations. We have also had fun using computing skills to solve math mysteries!

As always, thank you for your support and partnership,

Mrs. Farring Katherine.Farring@matsuk12.us

The Glanville Weekly

Language Arts: This week, we completed MAP testing, and I'm impressed with how the students pushed through and did their very best. Their brains worked hard!

We wrapped up *The Wind in the Willows*. The students were sad to see it end, but they enjoyed it so much! We also finished reading *Aladdin* and started *Alice in Wonderland*.

As our unit comes to an end, students have begun prewriting their first writing project of the year—an opinion paper. They will choose a theme from the story, identify the character who best portrays that theme, and provide evidence from the text to support their opinion. Ask your student about which theme and character they chose—and one reason why!

A new spelling list is coming home today. We will take one more 20-word test before beginning weekly 30-word tests.

Mrs. Glanville Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE



Nielsen's News:

Your children worked very hard on MAP testing this week. I am proud of all of them for their perseverance.

****Save the date: We are going to the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center October 7.**

ELA-

- Grammar: prefixes
- Novel study: Because of Winn Dixie- Dialogue discussion
- Writing: Personal Narratives- body that includes vivid verbs, sensory details, figurative language, and dialogue

Math-

- Multiplication/ division fluency
- Addition and Subtraction strategies: patterns, mental math, estimation with rounding, & adding whole numbers

Mrs. Nielsen Laurie.Nielson@matsuk12.us

Benbow's Buzz

Upcoming field trip information! We have a new date for the field trip to the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center! We will head down there on Wednesday, October 7. Please set that date aside so you can join us; it will be a nice chunk of volunteer hours as well as a great day at a wonderful location! Permission slips will be coming home soon.

Because we had MAP testing this week, there is not a lot to report about language arts or math classes this week. However, I am super proud of our language arts group because we already earned and enjoyed our first class party for reaching 5,000 reading minutes!

Kiddos should still be reading every day and making sure that those multiplication facts are solid!

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

5TH GRADE



We had an incredible time exploring Denali National Park! This trip was filled with adventure and hands-on learning opportunities. Students learned about the four different types of permafrost and even had the opportunity to probe for permafrost and collect data as a group. During the Taiga Time Travel hike, students examined the landscape around them and considered what the area may have looked like in the past and how it might look in the future.

A major highlight was touring the Sled Dog Kennels, where students learned about the important role sled dogs play in Denali. From there we hiked at Mt. Vista and finished off our time becoming official Junior Park Rangers! Students then took on the role of park managers where they tackled the job of being their own park manager and problem solving how their park would handle climate change in 100 years by monitoring and adapting different areas in the park. Check out their amazing National Parks displayed in our hallway!

A huge thank you goes to all of our wonderful parent volunteers who gave their time, energy, and support to help make this experience possible. We truly could not have done it without you! Thank you for trusting us with your kids! It was a privilege to spend this unforgettable time learning, exploring and growing with them. We are so proud of the curiosity, thoughtfulness, and enthusiasm our 5th graders brought to every experience!

Mrs. Sturgis and Mrs. Manley Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



SCHUMACHER MATH

We had math class this Friday in which students had a catch-up day of redos, reteaching, finishing knowledge checks, slide presentations and grading. Watch for the Take-Home-and-Bring-Back folder; it'll transport student papers and work to finish.

My math students are becoming more adept at Google Classroom. It's a great tool for advanced students to master because it improves tracking of fast-paced work, provides easy access to teacher feedback, and allows multiple paths for a student to show mastery of in-class work.

Mr. Schumacher
Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us



Outdoor Fitness

If you have a weed whacker or tall grass mower, the trails in the loop and woods still need your help! Delayed school construction means we'll have good trail access and extended hill use this year but we'll need to clean up the mess first.

Miss Molly said grades 6-8 did well in fitness class this week. Students who miss class due to injuries and school district sports events will be excused. A make-up exercise sheet is available in the office for absences. We practiced the form for the exercises we'd like to see with sit-ups, pushups, and squats with all the middle school classes last week. Your student will need supervision, initials, and a signature from a supervising adult to earn up to 80% of the points for the missed class. Attending the whole class is 20% of their grade.

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.

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

K-5 Lab Classes



3rd Grade: Students learned about surrealism and incorporated this style into an art project. They drew a realistic eye and used it to illustrate a special summer memory!

4th Grade: Students worked hard on self-portraits featuring rays filled with things they like and words that describe their personalities.

5th Grade: Students returned from Denali and began drafting and drawing split self-portraits. One side represents their physical appearance, while the other is a fun representation of who they are and the things they enjoy.

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Glanville



What an amazing week getting to know your kindergarten, first and second grade students! Kindergarten students blew me away with their classroom behavior and their willingness to try new things! We worked on refining motor skills by tracing lines, shapes and letters, then working through a maze and finally sitting patiently while a story was read aloud to them. First grade worked on adding details to sentences and identifying nouns and verbs. Second grade worked on putting story parts in order, then wrote sentences using transition words such as *first*, *next* and *last*.

Mrs. Sturgis and Ms. Benbow



Español with Señorita Catarina

Kindergarten students had their very first Spanish class this week! They received Spanish names, danced a little, sang a little and learned how to talk about the weather in Spanish. First and second graders are learning the vocabulary for school supplies by playing School Supply Hide'n'Seek. We also were pleasantly thrilled by the silly antics of La Maestra Chiquitita (The Teeny Tiny Teacher).



It has been a wonderful start with Kindergarten, First, and Second grade!

Kindergarten- Meet Arms, a Digital Citizen the helps us remember to balance our time with technology, Guts- reminds us to trust our gut and don't talk to strangers online

First- Digital Citizen Lessons: Pause and Think Online, Managing Device Distractions

Second- Digital Citizen Lessons: We, the Digital Citizens (review of all the ways to stay safe and kind online)

Mrs. Nielsen



3rd Grade Science: This week in Science was our first intermediate grades rotation! For Third Grade this week we took a deep dive into traits, inheritance, and variation of traits!

4th Grade Science: This week in Science it was our first week in a new rotation! For Fourth Grade this week we started looking into the inter workings of the eye and how its structure determines its function, as well as how different animal eyes are shaped and how that makes their functions just a little different.

5th Grade Science: This week in Science we took a pause for the cause, 5th grade was off having an awesome adventure in Denali!

Mr. and Mrs. Farring

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



3rd grade - World Rivers

4th grade - World Mountains

Mrs. Mayer and Mrs. Drummond





Middle School Spanish



Sixth graders took their first vocabulary test and either did very well or have a better idea of ways to improve their study habits for the next test. We are working with our new most necessary vocabulary - el baño - the bathroom! Students worked on illustrating and labeling a pop up bathroom for a future class project. Don't be surprised this weekend if your own bathroom becomes festooned with an array of labels.

Seventh graders are continuing to work with adjectives and following the rules for adjectives and all the agreements they must have with nouns. We practiced with our textbook, a new engaging Honeycomb game and orally. We got up out of our seats and had some shouty conversation practice while showing off Latin Dance moves.

Eighth graders are taking MAP tests this week. They are still responsible for completing this week's Choice Board and it will be due on Thursday as usual.

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



It has been another busy week in 6th grade! Students worked hard this week completing their MAP Growth assessments, and we are proud of their effort. Thank you for encouraging your students to get a good night's sleep and come to school ready to do their best!

In **Language Arts**, Mrs. Zerkel's crew continued to write their own epic quest, and Mr. Chadwell's group finished their Hero Storyboards. Both groups began our new novel, ***Black Ships Before Troy***, an engaging retelling of *The Iliad*. Students are excited to continue exploring Greek mythology and the legendary events of the Trojan War.

In **Math**, Mrs. Zerkel's class is building confidence with **decimal operations**, while Mr. Chadwell's class is continuing its study of **statistics**, including analyzing and interpreting data.

In **Social Studies**, students are hard at work on their **Ancient Greece projects**, using their creativity and research skills to showcase what they have learned about this fascinating civilization.

Thank you for your continued support! As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. We hope you have a wonderful weekend!

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



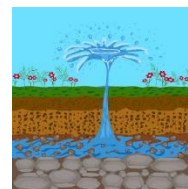
After investigating groundwater last week, we identified specific materials as either aquifers or aquitards. We also studied natural hazards, specifically landslides, and learned how scientists use models to study how rain triggers landslides.



We added both aquifer locations and landslide hazards to our considerations when determining where to store nuclear waste. Next week we will only have one science class due to Labor Day, and we will continue to look at other natural hazards.

Have a wonderful long weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeyer Cindy.Strohmeyer@matsuk12.us



"Success doesn't come to you; you've got to go to it." – Marva Collins

This week, students completed MAP tests in the areas of Reading, Math, and Language Usage. This data provides us with a baseline for the beginning of the seventh-grade year and instructional insight into where students' current strengths and weaknesses lie.

Students in English practiced our daily skills in editing, grammar, and reading comprehension. They demonstrated knowledge of Week 2's vocabulary and spelling words ("man/manu") and were assigned Week 3's words ("spec"). Students responded to their third writing prompt on diversity, identifying what they have in common with others and what makes them unique and unrepeatable. Students also read the poem "Mother to Son," also written by Langston Hughes. They read and annotated the poem, analyzing its use of metaphors and drawing connections to his short story "Thank You, M'am."

This week in Math, students continued to build math fluency, noticing improvements already made with daily practice and warmed up with daily math problems, targeting various skills. Students demonstrated their knowledge of Lessons 4 & 5 (Multiplying and Dividing Integers) and prepared for the Chapter 3 assessments (skills and vocabulary). They completed the tests on Friday. Students are reinforcing lessons with the two-sided riddle sheets given on Monday and due Friday, as well. They should also be working in ALEKS, mastering 10 topics each week (preferably crossing off topics connected to integers).

For History, students started the week using atlases to answer the week's 9 questions, supporting growth in map reading and geographic awareness. This week, we started the series *The Men Who Built America*, a docudrama, helping to bring the historical figures and events of the Industrial Revolution in America to life. Each student has been assigned a role to consider various perspectives during this era. Students viewed the first episode and completed their Character Logs at home. We discussed the viewing in class and took notes on vocabulary, main events, characters, and connections to the six ingredients of industrialization. Students will be viewing the second episode and completing its Character Log over the course of next week, ready to discuss on Monday, September 14. We also viewed an episode of student-friendly news to learn more about current events.

Together, this will be a great year!

Mrs. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us

Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: In between MAP testing, students worked on finishing their research for their Kennecott articles. They also turned in their first news site critique note sheet on an international media site. Students who get behind on this project will quickly become overwhelmed, so please check your Friday email to see if your child has turned theirs in.

Wright 7th math: The class is halfway through Chapter 2's focus on integers. Ten ALEKS topics are due Tuesday, Sept. 8.

Wright 7th history: Students made connections between a work of art and how historians record history - fact-based events are just one avenue. They also connected societal problems of the Industrial Revolution with the rise of the Progressive movement. They practiced constructing paragraphs in their notes from the 5ws on a variety of Progressive programs and continued their Kennecott history notes.

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

Mrs. Wright Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us



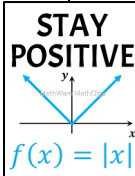
This week, we completed our Kennecott preparations! Ms. Dunham joined us again as we built mountain ranges outdoors using dirt and gravel. Students placed their "glaciers" into the mountain ranges, and on Thursday, we returned to observe how the melted glaciers created corresponding glacier features. The class is now fully prepared for the Kennecott field trip next week. Thank you, Ms. Dunham, for sharing your expertise!

Enjoy your weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeier cynthia.strohmeier@matsuk12.us



Maciel's Math Masters



The students dusted off their fraction knowledge this week as we reviewed several key concepts, including comparing and reducing fractions. They also continued to practice fact fluency every day, as these skills are fundamental to success in many areas of math. We will begin Chapter 4 when they return from Kennecott, and I think this week of review has them well prepared for success!

Mrs. Maciel Ashleigh.Maciel@matsuk12.us



This week we completed Fall MAP testing and I am so impressed by this group! Congratulations 8th grade on your hard work.

My Honors English I class have been having fantastic Harkness discussions on George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, which we finished reading & discussing on Wednesday, before completing the assessment on Thursday. Again, I am so incredibly impressed by this group, and I love how they challenge their peers each and every class period!

Speaking of our Washington D.C. tour., we spent a lot of time learning about numerous elements of our tour and about tour expectations. I sent an email earlier this week to both students & parents with our DC itinerary and departure/return details. These details are also posted in the 8th Grade Homeroom Google classroom. Please review this information and email me at stacy.molina@matsuk12.us with any additional questions. We look forward to seeing all of the students & parent chaperones at the airport **late Saturday night!**

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

Manley's Minute: English 1

Thank you to Ms. Irina for stepping in while I was in Denali with 5th grade.

The class continued to read *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. This week, Bruno went on an adventure and found the fence where he met Shmuel sitting on the other side. Since we've now met many characters in the novel, we paused to look at character traits and make predictions. We also looked at multiple examples of descriptive writing within the text and talked about the author's purpose. Lots of great connections were made!

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



	Alaska Air 593 Miles: 1542 Stops: 0	Departing	(ANC) Anchorage, AK Terminal: S	Sun Sep 06 at 12:45 AM
		Arriving	(PDX) Portland, OR	Sun Sep 06 at 05:23 AM
		Code Share: ALASKA		
	Alaska Air 10 Miles: 2350 Stops: 0	Departing	(PDX) Portland, OR	Sun Sep 06 at 07:52 AM
		Arriving	(DCA) Washington, DC Terminal: 2	Sun Sep 06 at 04:00 PM
		Code Share: ALASKA		
	Alaska Air 737 Miles: 2306 Stops: 0	Departing	(IAD) Washington, DC	Thu Sep 10 at 05:57 PM
		Arriving	(SEA) Seattle, WA	Thu Sep 10 at 08:44 PM
		Code Share: ALASKA		
	Alaska Air 1490 Miles: 1448 Stops: 0	Departing	(SEA) Seattle, WA	Thu Sep 10 at 09:59 PM
		Arriving	(ANC) Anchorage, AK Terminal: S	Fri Sep 11 at 12:47 AM



ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
Washington, D.C. and Charlottesville Expedition
Sept 6-Sept 10, 2026

Day 1 Sunday, Sept 6	Day 2 Monday, Sept 7	Day 3 Tuesday, Sept 8	Day 4 Wednesday, Sept 9	Day 5 Thursday, Sept 10
Depart 12:45am ANC Anchorage AS #593 (Alaska) Arrive 5:23am PDX Portland Depart 7:52am PDX Portland AS #10 (Alaska) Arrive 4:00pm DCA Washington Reagan Air Force Memorial Dinner 5:30pm Fireworks Pizza 2350 Clarendon Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201 Hotel Courtyard Springfield 6710 Commerce St, Springfield, VA 22150 Private Night Security	Breakfast 7:45am at hotel Morning 10:00am National Cathedral Souvenir Shopping Photo Stop Ford's Theater Lunch Chinatown (Allotment \$20) Afternoon 2:20pm US Capitol Tour National Archives Dinner 6:00pm Crystal City Sports Pub 529 23rd St S, Arlington, VA Evening Jefferson, FDR, MLK Memorials Hotel Courtyard Springfield 6710 Commerce St, Springfield, VA 22150 Private Night Security	Breakfast 6:30am at hotel Morning 9:15am Wreath Laying Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery Marine Corps Memorial Lunch L'Enfant Plaza (Allotment \$20) Afternoon Natural History Museum American History Museum 3:30pm Holocaust Museum Dinner 5:45pm Tupelo Honey 1615 N. Troy St., Arlington, VA Evening Lincoln, Korean, Vietnam Memorials Hotel Courtyard Springfield 6710 Commerce St, Springfield, VA 22150 Private Night Security	Breakfast 6:30am at hotel Morning 7:30am Depart for Charlottesville (2.5-hour drive) 11:10am Monticello Lunch 1:00pm Michie Tavern Afternoon Drive back to DC (2.5-hour drive) WWII Memorial White House Photo Dinner Crystal City Area (Allotment \$20) Evening Pentagon Memorial Hotel Courtyard Springfield 6710 Commerce St, Springfield, VA 22150 Private Night Security	Breakfast 7:15am at hotel Check out and load luggage Morning 9:00am Mount Vernon Lunch Pentagon City Mall (Allotment \$20) Afternoon Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum Leave for airport at 2:45PM Dinner At Airport (Allotment \$20) Depart 5:57pm IAD Washington Dulles AS #1490 (Alaska) Arrive 8:44pm SEA Seattle Depart 9:59pm SEA Seattle AS #1490 (Alaska) Arrive 12:47am ANC Anchorage NOTE: Itinerary details subject to change. This itinerary was last revised on: 7/8/2026 9:20:00 AM