



NEWSLETTER

September 25, 2026

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

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

Dear Academy Families,

Our students continue to be engaged in instruction, working diligently, and making great progress. We are proud of the effort they are putting into their learning each day.

Outstanding Fire Drill and Site Evacuation Drill

This week, our students successfully completed a fire drill followed by our annual Site Evacuation Drill. Once each year, Academy practices this additional drill so students understand how to safely partner with a neighboring grade level in the event we need to leave our campus. During the drill, older students are paired with younger students: eighth graders with kindergarteners, seventh graders with first graders, sixth graders with second graders, and so on. The older students walk alongside their younger partners to help ensure safe passage as we travel to the Department of Forestry, which serves as our alternate evacuation site should Academy's campus become unsafe following a catastrophic event, such as a large-scale earthquake.

For the drill, we coordinate with the Palmer Police Department to briefly stop traffic so our students and staff can safely cross Arctic Avenue both on the way to the Department of Forestry and on our return to Academy.

One of the most important safety skills we teach during an evacuation is the ability to remain calm, stay quiet, focus on the supervising adult, and be ready to respond to directions. Our students did an outstanding job!

Exciting Learning Activities and Community Service Projects

Our third grade is beginning a wonderful community service project to support the Palmer Food Bank. The food drive will run from Monday, September 28, through Friday, October 2. We are excited to see our students put their learning into action by serving and supporting our local community.

Our eighth grade also had the opportunity to meet with two representatives from Alaska Honor Flight. During their visit, our eighth graders accepted the responsibility of Mail Call, an important role in supporting Alaska Honor Flight. This is a tremendous responsibility, and we are proud of our students for stepping up to serve.

These grade level community service projects provide valuable lessons that go far beyond the classroom. They help our students understand the importance of service, responsibility, gratitude, and being an active part of their community.

Kudos to our incredible Academy staff and supportive families for making these meaningful experiences possible!

Brrrr! It's Getting Cold!

The temperatures are beginning to drop, especially during our morning recess at 9:45 a.m. Please begin sending students to school with hats, thin gloves, and warmer coats so they are prepared to be comfortable outside.

Have Questions or Concerns? WE CARE! If you have a question or concern, please don't hesitate to reach out by phone, in person, text, or email. WE CARE! I CARE! Most concerns can be addressed quickly when we communicate early and work together.

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



Date:	Event:
9/30	Fall Pictures



Date:	Event:
10/7	KG and 1 st Grade Palmer Lions Vision Screenings
10/7	4 th Grade AK Wildlife Conservation Center
10/26-30	Middle School Intensive Week
10/27	2 nd Grade Kids Don't Float
10/30	K-5 Halloween Parties



Elementary Cross Country

Last practice Tuesday the 6th.

Meet at Palmer High,
Wednesday the 7th, please
arrive at 3:00pm!

Kindergarten



This week, we added the phonograms J, K, L, M, and N to our growing collection of letter sounds. We have been spending lots of time learning about vowels and practicing how to sound out words using the phonograms we know.

Students also learned an important vowel rule: when a vowel is in the middle of two consonants, it usually makes its first sound. When a vowel is at the end of a word or syllable, it usually makes its second sound. We will continue practicing this concept as students build their early reading and decoding skills.

Many of our stories this week focused on apples. *Johnny Appleseed* is one of our assigned Core Knowledge stories. Ask your student, "Who was Johnny Appleseed?" and see what they can tell you!



Students have been working hard during our math block on addition and writing numbers beyond 10. We have been using ten-frames to help students visualize numbers and understand how quantities are composed. Students are making wonderful progress as they develop their number sense and addition skills!

As the weather gets colder, please make sure your student comes to school with the necessary cold-weather gear to stay warm during outdoor recess. Please also practice having your child put on and manage their outdoor clothing independently and efficiently, as this helps us transition to and from recess smoothly

Ms. Gerard Rachael.Gerard@matsuk12.us

hello FIRST GRADE

FIRST GRADE

- Almost every student has begun our Read Naturally program!
- Students have been establishing individualized reading goals, primarily with being "stretchy snakes" and "chunky monkeys."
- Verbs have been introduced during our writing block.
- Math has moved into subtraction while spiraling skip counting, subitizing, partners in ten and addition.

Contact us anytime!

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



Another great week in second grade! We have been busy learning new skills, settling into our routines, and having lots of fun along the way. This group continues to impress us, and we are so proud of the work they are doing!

We have started reading *My Father's Dragon*, and we are already enjoying this fun new adventure! In Language Arts, we have been learning about **proper nouns** and identifying **characters in a story**. We also officially started our **small group Language Arts instruction**, and everyone is doing a fantastic job! We love seeing students working at their own level, building skills, and growing their confidence.

In **Math**, we have continued working with **data and graphs**. We have been learning how to collect, organize, and interpret information in different ways.

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

Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us



The Farring Files

Language Arts: We have been taking a closer look at mammals, reptiles, and amphibians in our Animal Classification Unit. We've practiced seeking out information about each type of animal and using it to fill out graphic organizers. This week your child brought home a blue packet of all the Spalding Rules—my goal is for this to be a helpful resource where you can refer to any of the Spalding Rules as needed, at any time at home.

Math: We had fun applying our subtraction skills to subtract four and even five-digit numbers! We also reviewed the vocabulary we learned to discuss subtraction. We are now beginning to observe, model, and understand multiplication.

Please remember that if you need to reach out with any questions, the best way to reach me is by email.

As always, thank you for your partnership and support,

Mrs. Farring Katherine.Farring@matsuk12.us



2ND GRADE

3rd Grade

The Glanville Weekly



Language Arts: We continued Unit 2 on animal classification, learning about amphibians and reptiles. Students took notes as we read and classified each animal group. They also went on a frog scavenger hunt to learn about poison dart frogs and American green tree frogs, then worked together with their partner to compare and contrast the two. Next week, we'll work on and finish their animal report projects. They are so excited!

Students visited classrooms around the school to give brief presentations about our community service project for the Palmer Food Bank. Our food drive will run from Monday, September 28, through Friday, October 2. Third grade is participating, too! Students can bring canned goods and healthy, nonperishable pantry foods to fill our donation box. After the drive, we'll sort and count the donations.

Students entered 30 new words in their notebooks and took a 30-word spelling test. There will be no spelling test next week because students will take their monthly spelling assessment.

Math: We dove into Chapter 3, reviewing regrouping and subtraction with three- and four-digit numbers. Students are doing well with challenging problems that require several regrouping steps. Next week, we'll wrap up subtraction with a test and a fun activity before moving on to multiplication!

Students also continued working toward our goal of completing three ALEKS topics each day.

Have a wonderful weekend! Mrs. Glanville Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Benbow's Buzz

Nielsen's News:

ELA- What a wonderful week of adventures and wrapping up our first unit! Students finished their first published piece of writing- their personal narratives. We also kicked off our Middle Ages unit. In this unit, students will learn about the different levels of the feudal system, cause and effect with big events, and much more.

- Grammar: capitalization rules
- Spalding: List O3



***Please continue to send cereal boxes in for our next unit's final project. We will need a total of 32 boxes.**

Math- Math was short this week with our field trips, but it was worth it. We had a fantastic time!

- Multiplication/ division fluency- Your kids are doing awesome!!
- Concepts of Multiplication and Division: comparing using multiplication, understanding story problems, and commutative, associative, distributive and identity properties; Ch. 3 is already complete!
- Keep an eye out for tests coming home soon.

Mrs. Nielsen Laurie.Nielsen@matsuk12.us

Thank you to all the families who got that field trip permission slip signed and returned!

Please remember that this is a **CASH ONLY** trip, and we do need to get those funds together as soon as we can to ensure that our entry to the center is as smooth as possible.

Language Arts - This week was our second week of spelling homework; you should have seen a spelling list disguised as cursive practice coming home. There was also a handwriting page for practicing midpoint connections and a few of the trickier letters. We are focusing on letter formation and size, as well as making sure that our letters are resting on the baseline. This is very important because it will have an impact on spelling tests if I cannot tell if it was a cursive error or a spelling error. Please check in with your kiddo to see how the first test went and possibly help to set up a homework routine to ensure that the rest of the year goes smoothly. Each morning we practice sentence writing, which consists of identifying and correcting fragments and run-on sentences, as well as unscrambling sentences and writing all four sentence types. Daily Language Review this week covered compound predicates, adding suffixes to change the part of speech, sentence editing and identifying adverbs. We also finished our Personal Narratives this week.

Math - We spent this week laying the foundation for a strong understanding of the multiplication process. We practiced multiplying multiple digit numbers by a single digit following the standard algorithm as well as using the area model, which begins with writing our factors in expanded form before multiplying each value. As we move through our multiplication unit, you might see multiplication books come home for additional practice if your kiddo has not progressed through the timed tests for basic multiplication facts. Automatic recall of these basic 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.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns!

Cherie.Benbow@matsuk12.us



5TH GRADE



Sturgis Super Students!

Language Arts: I have been so proud of how this class did on their first spelling test. Overall, scores were great! I have split the class into three groups for spelling based on spelling instruction needs: Moose, Ptarmigan, and Salmon. Each list will have 20 words that are the same for the entire class, and each group will have ten words that are at their appropriate level. The next test will be on Thursday, October 1.

We finished the first of our Personal Narrative stories and will be doing a writing assignment to go along with that next week. Students will also begin working on a personal narrative about their name, which will include doing some research about where their name came from.

Math: The class is moving along through our 2nd chapter, Multiplication. This week the students practiced factoring, explored properties of addition and multiplication, and began using PEMDAS (Order of Operations) to solve equations. Students also added a new game to their math books, Partial Product Pickle, to practice one strategy to solve multiplication problems.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us

The Manley Minute:

Language Arts: This week in language arts we entered 30 words in our Spalding notebook and worked on defining and recognizing rules 2 and 6. As part of our Personal Narratives unit, students worked on using strong adjectives to describe nouns and including the literary element of personification in their writing. We also read a variety of texts where students identified examples of vivid language and literary elements that helped them create strong pictures in their minds. Our goal is for students' writing to provide the reader with enough detail to be able to visualize what is happening in their story.

Math: This week, students were decimal detectives and completed a CSI packet where they solved math problems to uncover clues. Each clue required students to demonstrate their understanding of decimals, including identifying place value, writing decimals in expanded form, comparing and ordering decimals and rounding decimals. It was great practice for them to apply their knowledge while adding a little mystery and excitement. We wrapped up the week by taking our chapter test.

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



SCHUMACHER MATH

We had a good week working with rates, ratios, and proportions. Students are finishing the first chapter of their course, so it's time for a test. Unlike a quiz which can be retaught and redone multiple times, test redos are allowed once per semester. Most students had the opportunity to make project progress and I plan to wrap up the rate & ratio project next week.

Students will have some time to master Quicktables in in class, but it won't be the 1/2 hour that ALEKS allows each day. A brief, daily practice at home will make a huge difference for your child's math fact fluency. If your child has "no homework" but has a little extra time, mastering topics from whole numbers, fractions, and decimals will fill any "holes" in content knowledge from previous years' classes or summer's memory lapse.

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 lots of work. 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.

Outdoor fitness classes went well this week with a mix of biking and disc catch relay. Middle school students who miss class due to injuries or school district sports events will be excused. Other absences will require a make-up workout sheet completion to earn points for their grade. These forms are available from myself, Miss Molly or Miss Melissa. Your student will need 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. Finally, being prepared for class means your middle schooler has put on supportive outdoor footwear and has changed from their uniform to workout clothes which will be another 2/10 points and increasingly important as the weather deteriorates.

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

K-5 Lab Classes



Kindergarten: We were happy to welcome kindergarten back for their second art rotation! Students worked on their Square One Art project, drawing a moose with the northern lights in the background.

1st Grade: We were happy to welcome first grade back for their second art rotation! Students are creating an above-and-below-ground scene featuring animals living in a surreal underground home, with trees above. They will practice drawing textures throughout their artwork.

2nd Grade: We were happy to welcome second grade back for their second art rotation! Students reviewed the landscape concepts they learned in first grade and drew a new landscape with a foreground, middle ground, and background. They then began a one-point perspective landscape.

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Glanville



Kindergarten - Introduction of the Mt. Rushmore presidents.

1st grade - Study of the first civilization in Mesopotamia.

2nd grade - Exploration of Ancient China.

Mrs. Mayer and Mrs. Drummond



Español with Señorita Catarina

Third, fourth and fifth graders are continuing with the pronunciation perfecting work of daily dictation exercises.

Third grade is starting off dictating letter sounds only before moving on to words. Our students work so hard at being successful reading, writing and speaking with the English alphabet that they have to stretch their brains to accommodate the nuances of the Spanish alphabet.

Students started a new conversation about the places they will go and are looking forward to learning about the only African Spanish speaking country.



Third through Fifth are continuing building good hand posture, accuracy and speed in typing.

3- Coding: graph paper programming, Intro to online puzzles

4- Coding: (Sprite lab) Swimming Fish, Hello World

5- Finished Denali brochures

Mrs. Nielsen



Kinder Science: This week with kindergarten we started to talk about the needs of all living things and even planted some alfalfa to look at what that plant needs in order to grow.

First Grade Science: This week in First Grade Science we started to look up and look at the clouds and weather

Second Grade Science: This week in Second Grade Science we started to take a look into changing landforms and how the Earth changes from different environmental factors.

Mr. and Mrs. Farring

katherine.farring@matsuk12.us

timothy.farring@matsuk12.us



Third through 5th grade worked hard in writing lab this week. They practiced editing paragraphs, writing different types of sentences, and worked on showing, rather than telling in their writing. The students also did some planning for a creative writing project using sketches and jot notes.

Mrs. Sturgis and Ms. Benbow



Middle School Spanish

Sixth graders are doing a great job of handling all their new responsibilities and staying organized for Spanish class. They are crushing their house vocabulary and are showing signs of becoming architects in the future. Students have been learning about Mexico and Mexican Independence Day.

Seventh graders are taking their first rules of adjective test this week. We discussed Hispanic Heritage Month. Each student researched a Hispanic person that has made an indelible mark upon the world and wrote extremely simple Spanish sentences about them. We will present to class next week.

Eighth graders are working with chore words and the verb construct Tener+Que+Infinitive that helps them speak about the things they HAVE to do. Students made some interesting comic strips about superheroes and villains and their daily chores to cement the idea.



Spanish 1 students are using the Ir+A+Infinitive verb construct to speak about what they are going to do and write about their bright futures. Students created Time Capsules in Spanish which they will keep in our school office for ten years and then go back and collect and see if their predictions about themselves came true. Will Eve be a professional athlete? Will Reagan be a doctor? Will Eliana be a professional artist? Only time will tell...

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us

Middle School Art-Ventures with Ms. Christensen

Our middle school art elective, "Dragon Eyes," is underway! Students have started with a small dragon eye drawing in pen and ink and colored it with colored pencils and markers. Then, after choosing a patterned painted paper, students cut the paper into a shape of a large egg and a hole for their dragon eye to "peek" out. This week we will begin work on a dragon eye sculpture with a glass eye and air-dry clay.



It's been another busy and exciting week in 6th grade! We officially wrapped up our Greek unit with a fun round of **Greek Olympics**. Students had a great time putting their city-state pride to the test and celebrating the end of our Ancient Greece unit!

Language Arts: Mr. Chadwell's class finished up their Greek projects this week. Mrs. Zerkel's class participated in our first **Harkness discussion** using the short story *Unusual Normality*. Students were engaged, thoughtful, and did a fantastic job sharing their ideas and building on one another's thinking. Both classes also kicked off our **poetry unit** with Edgar Allan Poe's famous poem *The Raven*. Next week, we will begin our much-anticipated unit on the **Salem Witch Trials**!

Math: Mr. Chadwell's class is working with **ratios and percentages** and putting those skills into practice through several fun projects, including a mock basketball player draft using averages and statistics. Mrs. Zerkel's class continues working with **decimals, fractions, and percents**. Students are putting their math skills to a real-world test as they work on the exciting challenge of **buying their first car**!

Social Studies: Students completed their **Greek unit test** this week and have now started their new unit on **world religions**. We're looking forward to learning about the beliefs, traditions, and cultures that have helped shape societies around the world. It was a great week of learning, discussion, competition, and hands-on projects.

We're excited to see what next week brings!

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



Our 6th grade scientists analyzed data on the locations of earthquakes and volcanoes this week! They were able to observe patterns, recognizing where those locations are more likely to occur, as well as find the strongest earthquakes and the tallest volcanoes. We also briefly discussed how scientists use GPS data to help understand the Earth's surface and how it's moving. By the end of the week, we started thinking about what makes up our Earth's interior. Enjoy your weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeyer Cindy.Strohmeyer@matsuk12.us



Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Students wrapped up their informational text unit this week. They reviewed as a class by writing questions for a class Gimkit and tested Thursday. They also completed their last news site critique research piece and will write their paper next week. A second peer review on their Kennebec articles enabled them to revise a final draft prior to building their class website next week.

Wright 7th math: The class completed its practice of Chapter 3's operation with rational numbers with a test Friday. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday.

Wright 7th history: The class took notes and completed a WebQuest on the Panama Canal this week. After reviewing concepts each day, and creating a class review together, students tested on the Industrial Revolution Tuesday. Their Harkness discussion was a debate on the pros and cons of the revolution: was the average citizen better or worse off after it occurred? Next week, they'll dive into learning about government types in the early 20th century in preparation for the Russian Revolution.



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

Mrs. Wright Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us

"Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think."
- Albert Einstein

In English this week, students practiced determining important information with daily reading passages and demonstrated their knowledge of assigned Week 4 vocabulary words ("dict"), while learning ten more words with the root "ject." They were also tested on the retention of the first 40 vocabulary words. Students reviewed and practiced identifying and using personification. They also reviewed the elements of a short story and the plot diagram. For this week's writing entry, students wrote about a recent wise choice made about schoolwork and the rewards it brought.

Students in math are improving their accuracy and speed in multiplication and division and continued working in Chapter 3, covering adding and subtracting fractions with like and unlike denominators and adding and subtracting mixed numbers. They reviewed the first five lessons and completed the Mid-Chapter Quiz as well. If your child is struggling with any concept that we are working with in class, ALEKS can be a tool used to provide additional instruction and practice. There are also multiple instructional videos posted in the Google Classroom for support. Review quiz scores to determine where weaknesses may lie. Each lesson builds on the previous, so timely mastery is essential for success.

This week in history, students answered 9 more geography questions and took their first quiz covering questions from Weeks 1-4. They used their notebooks for support and recognized the value of writing answers in complete sentences. They continued their studies of the first and second industrial revolutions. We added J.P. Morgan, Jr. and Thomas Edison to the list with Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Vanderbilt as captains of industry, discussing how each obtained power and wealth. When learning more about Edison, students discovered that invention is not equal to innovation; building an invention, especially one that changes the world, requires the Six Ingredients. Students are now drawing connections that industrialization creates power, power creates competition, and competition creates conflict. Students will be watching Episode 6 to be ready to debrief next Wednesday with their completed logs.

Together, this will be a great year!

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us

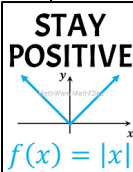


In starting our "Cells to Organisms" unit, we modeled a disease outbreak in class on Tuesday! Students traveled around the room to different "locations" to see if they ended up with the disease at the end. We then took that class data and analyzed it to figure out where the disease originated. We figured out it was those students who swam at the lake! Next week we are going to use microscopes, but students need to earn their microscope license first. To do this, they need to study this weekend to pass the quiz. Good luck and enjoy your weekend!

Mrs. Strohmeier cynthia.strohmeier@matsuk12.us



Maciel's Math Masters



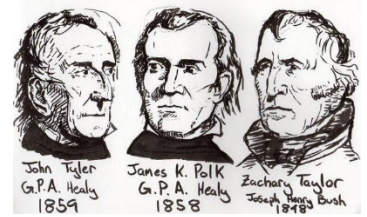
The fraction battle continues, but victories have been won! The students did very well with their mid-chapter quiz. Everyone is happy that multiplying and dividing fractions doesn't require a common denominator. The tricky part can be reducing, but we continue to practice and build confidence!

Mrs. Maciel Ashleigh.Maciel@matsuk12.us



We've completed another full and engaging week of the 2026–27 school year and it is hard to believe that we are almost to the end of September! Our students continue to impress me with their curiosity & thoughtful conversations.

This week in Civics/History, we took a deeper look at the Articles of the United States Constitution and how they create the structure of our federal government. We also learned about Presidents #10–12: John Tyler, James K. Polk, and Zachary Taylor.



In Leadership, students wrote letters to veterans participating in the Last Frontier Honor Flight Mission #23. This is always such a meaningful opportunity for our students to express their gratitude to those who have served our country. We also took the Enneagram personality assessment and discussed how the more we understand ourselves, the better equipped we are to understand others and navigate the world around us.

In Math, we continued working through our real numbers unit and strengthening our understanding of exponents. We also tackled logic puzzles, using the important principle that what we do know can help us solve what we do not yet know.

In Honors English I, we continued reading Ayn Rand's Anthem, which has sparked some fantastic conversations about individuality, freedom, identity, and society. I love watching students examine these larger ideas and respectfully challenge one another's thinking.

We are also very excited to welcome our new student, Abi! She has already been a wonderful addition to our class, and we are so happy to have her join us.

Finally, please mark your calendars for the Last Frontier Honor Flight Homecoming on Saturday, October 10. Additional details will follow soon!

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

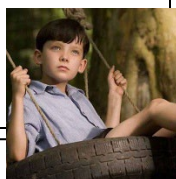


Manley's Minute: English 1

After completing the book, we watched the movie and compared it to the novel. Students looked carefully at what was changed, added, or left out and considered how those choices affected the characters, events, and overall message of the story. It was interesting to see students recognize details from the book and notice differences in how the story was presented on screen. They all agreed that many details were left out and the novel was more interesting.

Students also completed their final assessment over the novel which included identifying quotes, questions about key events and themes and essay questions which required them to support their ideas with evidence from the novel.

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



This week in Algebra 1 we continued working on chapter 2 looking at equations, expressions, and how to use them in real world application scenarios.



This week in science we finished up our Force and motion unit and started our next unit looking into the Earth, Moon, and Sun as a system.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us