



OTIS A. MASON ELEMENTARY

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# The Manatee Memo

## News for Mason Families

December 6, 2019



Dr. Nigel D. Pillay, Principal  
Mrs. Jill Hillier, Assistant Principal

Dear Mason Families,

We want to extend our heart-felt appreciation for all of the families and community members that donated for our Thanksgiving drive and Holiday toy drive. Due to your generosity we were able to provide full Thanksgiving meals, turkey and all, to over 60 families! With the help of our school family, Beaver Toyota, Palm Valley Academy, Good News Club, Dollar General, Kiwanis Club, and Publix, over 90 students will have something to smile about this holiday season as they receive toys and items on their wish lists. We are grateful for the love, support and kindness that has been shown to our students and their families.

The iReady Winter Assessment will begin the week of Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. Students will take the Math Diagnostic Assessment prior to the winter break and the Reading when they return in January. Please check with your child's teacher for testing dates and times. We look forward to seeing how much progress and growth the kids have made so far this year!

Please note that we will release one hour early at **1:45PM on Friday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>**. We hope everyone enjoys the winter break! We will see all the students back at school on Monday, January 6, 2020.

Enjoy the holidays and Happy New Year!

All the best,

*Dr. Nigel D. Pillay & Mrs. Jill Hillier*  
Principal Assistant Principal

### OUR VISION:

The "Mason Way" is one that nurtures a passion in every child for personal success, good character, and a desire to learn, explore, and better themselves as they grow to be responsible members of our community.

### OUR MISSION:

At Mason Elementary, we believe student success is fostered by a continuous commitment to improvement, which ensures well-rounded and motivated learners. We do this by maintaining a safe and dynamic learning environment, promoting high expectations for all students, nurturing determination, developing personal relationships, and involving our community.



**Otis Mason's Annual STEM Night is on Thursday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> from 5-7:00 PM. Please come view the projects completed school-wide and participate in a few fun stations.**

**\*Early Release at 1:45 PM on Friday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>\***

## School Hours

School Hours - 7:55AM to 3:45PM (daily)

Student Hours - 8:25AM to 2:45PM (M, T, Th, F)  
8:25AM to 1:45PM (Weds.)

1<sup>st</sup> bell at 8:20, 2<sup>nd</sup> bell at 8:25

Students arriving after the 2<sup>nd</sup> bell must be walked inside and signed in by the parent/guardian.



Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>  
to  
Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>

School is  
back in  
session on  
Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>

**Happy Holidays!**

## Important Dates

12/4 - S.T.A.R. Wednesday for 4<sup>th</sup> grade  
12/10-12/13 – Holiday Shop  
12/10 – SAC Meeting at 3:30PM in the Media Center  
12/11 – S.T.A.R. Wednesday for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
12/12 – STEM Night 5:00-7:00PM  
12/16 – PTO Meeting at 3:30PM in the Media Center  
12/17 – Winter Performance at 6:30PM  
12/18 – S.T.A.R. Wednesday for ESE/Resource  
Holiday Performance  
12/20 – Early Dismissal at 1:45PM/Modified Resource Day D  
12/23-1/3 – Winter Break  
1/6 – School resumes  
1/8 – S.T.A.R. Wednesday for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade  
1/15 - S.T.A.R. Wednesday for 1<sup>st</sup> grade  
1/17 – Report Cards Issued  
1/20 – NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Day  
1/22 – S.T.A.R. Wednesday for Kindergarten  
Jump Rope for Heart Kickoff  
1/24 – LEADers with Character Celebration  
1/27 – PTO Meeting at 3:30PM in the Media Center  
1/29 – S.T.A.R. Wednesday for ESE/Resource  
1/31 – NO SCHOOL – Teacher In-service Day



### Volunteers Needed for Holiday Shop

We are in need of volunteers for holiday shop week to help set up, manage (help students pick out items within his or her budget, restock, etc.), and break down the shop. Volunteers must be on the approved list to help within the Holiday Shop. If you or a family member are able to assist, please sign up at <http://bit.ly/penguinpatch> or email us at [otismasonpto@gmail.com](mailto:otismasonpto@gmail.com).

## Announcements

### The Mason Mana "Tree" –

If you and your family are looking to sponsor a child for the holidays this year, please consider visiting our Mana "Tree" in the front lobby of the school. There are ornaments with wish lists to choose from on the tree. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Hamill, School Counselor.

### Spelling Bee Winner –

Congratulations to fifth grader, Lucy Zicht on winning the OMES Spelling Bee!

### Winter Performance by Chorus and Steel Band –

If you and the family would like some entertainment on the evening of Tuesday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, come on out to the school and watch our Chorus and Steel Band perform. They have a special performance prepared for winter. The show will begin right at 6:30PM. Doors will open at 6:00PM.

### New Playground OPEN –

The new playground is finally open! We hope the kids enjoy the new structure!

## Student Council Envision Hands Project –

Our Student Council is collecting different types of lids that will be donated to a company that turns the recycled plastic into Prosthetic hands for children. Please begin collecting lids such as Gatorade, soda, milk, ketchup, orange juice and send them in for this special project. Please visit the site below if you would like to learn more.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCRjefs2aJY>



The CHARACTER COUNTS! Steering Committee is calling all walkers, runners and fitness enthusiasts to participate in the CHARACTER COUNTS! 6K/3K Run/Walk on Saturday, February 1, 2020, at 9 a.m. The run/walk will begin and end at Palencia Elementary School located at 355 Palencia Village Drive, St. Augustine.

Registration fees are as follows:

**6K:** \$25 before January 1    \$30 January 1-January 31    \$35 on race day

**3K:** \$20 before January 1    \$25 January 1-January 31    \$30 on race day

Registration forms and more information are available online at [www.racesmith.com/races/CHARACTERCOUNTS.html](http://www.racesmith.com/races/CHARACTERCOUNTS.html).

Race proceeds support CHARACTER COUNTS! initiatives throughout the St. Johns County School District (SJCSD). The run/walk is open to all ages, and the top three winners will be awarded in each of the age categories as well as the overall male and female finishers. **A cash donation will be awarded to the top three to five schools with the most registrants.**

## From the Mason PTO

Holiday Greetings!

We want to THANK YOU for your support! Chick-Fil-A as well as the Nights of Lights Ameris Parking lot turned out a GREAT success! Our next Spirit Night is scheduled for the Spring.

**Penguin Patch Holiday Shop** is coming to our school [Dec 10-13](#) during school hours. Your child will be able to participate in an educational, fun, and exciting experience. We are in need of volunteers that will help set up, manage (help students pick out items within his or her budget, restock, etc.), and break down the shop. Please sign up to volunteer: <http://bit.ly/penguinpatch>.

We offer different gifts that can be purchased – for as little as \$.25 and up to \$12.00 each. The Holiday Shop is a fun, unique way to empower your children with generosity.

Lastly, please ensure that the **gift list budget envelope** is completed and returned (with cash only) to school on the date that your child's class is scheduled to shop. Please don't let your child miss this opportunity to grow and experience the spirit of giving!

We will be hosting a Staff Holiday Party [on December 18<sup>th</sup>](#). If you are interested in donating or volunteering, please email us at [otismasonpto@gmail.com](mailto:otismasonpto@gmail.com)

### **Misc PTO Update:**

Spirit Wear: We have received in our long sleeve, hoodies, and shirts.  
Socks \$8   Shirts \$10   Long Sleeve \$15   Hoodie \$20

### **Box Tops and Coke Codes:**

The box tops and coke codes have been coming in and being counted. Please keep them coming!!! Some Box Tops codes are set to expire soon, so double check your codes products and get those sent it. Don't forget Box Tops is going digital – you can download the Box Top App and start earning without clipping

## **Repeated Announcements**

### **Interpreter Requests –**

If you are in need of an interpreter for an event at Mason, we ask you to send a request in writing at least two weeks in advance of the event. The school and/or district will arrange for the interpreter but we need your help in asking to notify us as far in advance as you can. Please communicate these requests with your child's teacher and the Assistant Principal ([Jill.Hillier@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Jill.Hillier@stjohns.k12.fl.us)).

We also ask that you let us know as soon as possible if you need to cancel a prearranged interpreter. This is an additional expense to the SJCS D so we appreciate your consideration and helping us to be conscious of these costs.

### **Special Celebrations –**

We love to celebrate when there is a special occasion! However, we ask that you please follow these guidelines if your child is celebrating while at school:

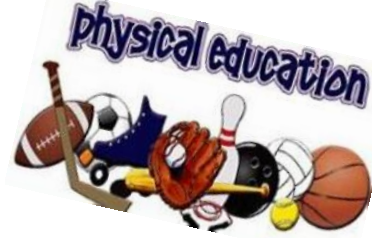
- Treats must be cookies, brownies, or anything sweet that is **ICING FREE** and **PRE-PACKAGED**. **No cupcakes, regular cakes, cookie cakes, or home-baked goods will be permitted.**
- Treats may only be shared with your child's classmates and teacher.
- If needed, napkins, plates and/or utensils should be provided to the teacher.
- Communicate with your child's teacher about when you would like to bring something in, what you will be bringing and check if there are any allergies in the class.
- No balloons or banners are permitted. Special shirts or buttons are allowed.
- Birthday invitations must include everyone in the class if they are being handed out at school.

### **SJCSD Revised Service Animal Policy –**

- The school district has revised its policy for service animals in schools. The St. Johns County School District permits the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability and will not engage in any act or practice that has the purpose or effect of discrimination against an individual with a disability in the use of a service animal in §§ accordance with Title II (28 C.F.R. 35.104, 35.136). For more information, please visit the SJCSD or Mason websites.

## P.E. News –

- In order to promote healthy food snack choices, the Physical Education (PE) Department needs your help. To provide a reward system in PE for the Manatee money students are earning at school, we will be giving out “healthy snacks” that the students can “buy” when they come to PE class. Everything will be in self-contained small packaging and will not require refrigeration. We are looking for the following donations to make this reward system work:
- \*Trail Mix
- \*Cereal Bars/Granola bars
- \*Popped/Baked Snacks (pretzels, chips, popcorn, Cheetos, etc.)
- \*Sweet & Salty mix snacks
- \*Gummy Fruit Snacks
- Thanks very much,
- Coach Hollister, Coach A. and Coach Norm



Please visit our Clubs and Activities webpage to learn more about extracurricular opportunities that are offered at Mason beyond the school day  
<https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/clubs/>.

## Dismissal Changes

If you are changing the way your child normally goes home, please contact the school in one of three ways: a note in the planner, written note from home, or via the Dismissal Change link on our Mason homepage (top right corner if using a computer). Dismissal changes will not be accepted after 2:15PM/1:15PM on Weds. unless there is an emergency.

## Volunteers and Visitors

In an ongoing effort to provide safety and security for students and staff, **all visitors and volunteers MUST complete a “School Access Form”** with the SJCS. The form can be found at <https://stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply>. If a person does not apply for school access or has been denied access, he/she will NOT be permitted to enter the school building or attend special events during the school day. **Those that have applied and are approved must present a valid ID and wear a printed name badge to enter the building.**

We are always seeking volunteers! Please sign up in KeepnTrack and contact Mrs. Puch at 547-8440 for information on how you can assist our school.

**LEAD** the way . . . Every day



**L**ive Safely

**E**xhibit Kindness

**A**ct Responsibly

**D**emonstrate Respect