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The Manatee Memo

News for Mason Families

December 4, 2020



Mrs. Monique Keaton, Principal
Mrs. Anne Marie Raynor, Assistant Principal

Dearest Mason Families,

Three full months and one week into this school year and we are going strong. This newsletter comes with hopes and prayers that you had a sweet, memorable Thanksgiving Day Holiday with friends and family. With open arms we welcome the last month of the 2020 school year. Prior to seeing what this month brings, we want to celebrate and share news from the last Tuesday in the month of November 2020. Jill Hiller, Otis A. Mason's Assistant Principal, has been asked to serve as Assistant Principal at Ponte Vedra Ponte Vedra Elementary School. We will miss Mrs. Hillier a lot but we are happy for her learning and growing opportunities with another fine elementary school in our school district. Mrs. Anne Raynor, our current Math Coach and OMES Teacher of the Year, was promoted and our SJCSD named her as the new Assistant Principal here at our school. Join me in celebrating the successes of these two St. Johns County Learning Leaders.

Speaking of leaders, hopefully you, parent leader, had fun participating in our Parent BINGO Challenge! Remember, you were to have fun completing as many BINGO squares as possible by this past Monday, November 30th. You were then to return the BINGO card to your child's teacher no later than Tuesday, December 1st. The parents with the most completed BINGO squares will be entered into a drawing for a gift card donated by our PTO. Just one more amazing way our OMES PTO supports our school community. Thank you, Otis A. Mason Elementary PTO!

The hours of service from our PTO is ongoing. Another fine way they service the students, parents and teachers of our school community is by joyfully, creating a magical Holiday Shop! That's right! Shop, a-lot, till you drop, all at one safe spot! They turn our school environment into one fun safe shopping adventure. At the Holiday Shop our students can safely browse, ooh- ahh and buy, gifts for Papa, Gammy, their siblings, daddy and mama, all at one time. Volunteers will monitor objects, ensure little fingers are sanitized prior to shopping, ensure students point but only touch what they purchase, practice social distancing and stay masked up while in the shop. Parents, thank YOU for helping your child buy the gifts they want you and their loved ones to have, experience the joy of shopping, creating the element of surprise and benefit your child's school all at the same time. Read below for more information about the OMES Holiday Shop! Read more information about the OMES Holiday Shop on page 3!

This month, like the last three, will come and go before we know it. We have two more weeks of school this year before we welcome in 2021. What do you have planned for your family during the Christmas/Winter Break? Consider adding the gift of reading to that list. Did you know:

1. Kids who read often and widely get better at it
2. Reading exercises our brains
3. Reading improves concentration
4. Reading teaches children about the world around them
5. Reading improves a child's vocabulary and leads to more highly developed language skills
6. Reading develops a child's imagination
7. Reading helps kids develop empathy
8. Children who read do better at school
9. Reading is a great form of entertainment
10. Reading relaxes the body and calms the mind

Lastly, I will share, as of now, the SJCSD is planning on classes resuming on Monday, January 4th, 2021. This resuming of classes is noted on the SJCSD Master Calendar, updated and approved on July 28th, 2020. Should there be any changes, we will let you know. Please remember to stay safe, make precious memories, count your many blessings and enjoy your family and friends.

Happy Holidays,
Monique Keaton, Principal



WINNER!

Thank you to ALL of our families that participated in the Parent Bingo Challenge! We had a wonderful turn out!

The winner is..... **Jordin from Ms. Fletcher's Class!**

Congrats Jordin on participating with your family and winning the Bingo Challenge! And thank you to PTO for supplying the gift card for our winner.

Otis A. Mason Website

Please visit the OMES website each week for important updates and information.

Click here → [OMES Website](https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/)
or go to <https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>

Mrs. Raynor, our New Assistant Principal

Mrs. Raynor was born in Hartford, CT to a military family. Growing up, she lived and traveled around the world. Mrs. Raynor graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education in 2010 and completed her graduate work in Educational Leadership at Jacksonville University in 2015. The 2020-2021 school year is Mrs. Raynor's fifth year as a Mason Manatee. She has previously served as a 4th and 5th grade teacher, as well as our Math Coach & Interventionist. Mrs. Raynor loves reading, listening to podcasts and music, and doing DIY projects at home with her husband, two cats, and two dogs. She is thrilled to continue her journey at Mason this new capacity.

Congratulations to Mrs. Anne Marie Raynor, our new Assistant Principal!

Important Dates

12/7-12/11	Holiday Shop! Details below
12/8	Interims Issued
12/9	DREAM TEAM Wednesday for Kindergarten Early Release at 12:55pm
12/15	SAC meeting at 3:30 Virtually
12/16	DREAM TEAM Wednesday for 5 th Grade Early Release at 12:55pm
12/17	Spelling Bee for 5 th Grade
12/18	Last Day of School – Early Release 1:45 pm
12/21 – 1/3	Winter Break – Student/Teacher Holiday
1/4	Classes Resume
1/6	DREAM TEAM Wednesday for 4 th Grade
1/13	DREAM TEAM Wednesday for 3rd Grade
1/18	Martin Luther King Holiday, Student/Teacher Holiday



OMES Annual ManaTree Program

We want to wish all our manatee families a happy holiday season! Our annual “mana-tree” is now up and filled with wishes to help brighten up Christmas morning for a few children. If you would like to contribute, stop by the front office and pick a wish off of our tree! Items are due back by **Monday December 14th**.

LEAD the way . . . Every day



Live Safely

Exhibit Kindness

Act Responsibly

Demonstrate Respect

Mask Reminder!

Masks should be worn daily and washed DAILY. Remember to keep in touch with Nurse Johna if you or your kids are feeling ill. Thank you! 904-547-8444



Cold weather is here! Please remember to send your child to school with proper outdoor gear (jacket, hat, etc). All items should be labeled with your student's name just in case something is left on the playground.



To Parents of Distance Learners

Dear Distance Learning Families,

The 2nd semester begins on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. We need to know which learning platform you are choosing for your child. The most effective instructional delivery for students is inside a classroom with a teacher and their peers, therefore we hope to see you back on campus. We understand that the distance learning platform continues to be a need for some families. We will group our remaining distance learners together. This may result in a teacher change for your child.

If your child had any failing grades for the first quarter, the school has likely been in touch with you. When remote instruction is not working for a student, we must encourage a return to campus.

The deadline for your selection is Sunday, December 6, 2020. This choice is a commitment for the remainder of the school year.

Please complete the survey that was sent to you. Complete one form for each distance learner in your household.

A Message from Ms. Hamill, our School Counselor

Beginning last year a state mandate was put in place that all students in grades kindergarten through 12 are to receive instruction related to youth substance use and abuse health education (Rule 6A-1.094122, District 3 F.A.C) and child trafficking prevention and awareness (Rule 6A-1.094123, F.A.C). Red Ribbon Week activities at Otis A. Mason gave students the opportunity to learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. In January, Kathy Hamill, School Counselor, will begin presenting a classroom lesson from Lauren's Kids, Safer Smarter Kids, to all grades to meet the state mandate for child trafficking prevention. The lesson will be age appropriate and focus on basic safety measures. Your child will bring home a letter regarding the lesson specific to his/her grade level prior to the lesson.

To view frequently ask questions you may visit: www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/mh-instruction.

The Manatee Holiday Surprise Store is BACK!

Our Covid Conscious Holiday shop will be up and running December 7 – 11 for our littlest manatees to shop during school hours. We will have volunteers available to help our students shop for their holiday gift needs. Please use the envelope sent home by PTO to send the money in with your student. Be sure to have the envelope labeled with student first and last name as well as teacher name. If sending a check in with your student, please make it payable to Mason PTO. If you would like to volunteer for the store, please visit the Mason PTO Facebook page.

Snacks Needed for PE

We are offering "Healthy Snacks" as a Manatee Money Reward for PE Class. Students pay their teachers \$10 Manatee Bucks to purchase a "Coach's Coupon" that they can redeem for a Healthy Snack during their scheduled PE Class. The Healthy Snacks (individually packaged) we are offering include:

- Baked Cheetos
- Baked Chips: Cheddar & Sour Cream, Barbeque, Original
- Popcorn: "Smartfood" White Cheddar
- Refrigerated Items:
 - Mini Oranges/Tangerines ("Cuties")
 - Cheese Sticks

If you would like to help supply us with some Healthy Snacks, we would be grateful.

Thanks! Coach Hollister and Coach D.



PASSPORT TO LEARNING

OMES Families: structure and continuity for students is important! Students thrive on structure. Obviously, increased learning creates confident students.

We are providing our Little Manatees with the opportunity to continue to brush up on skills and standards over the 16-day holiday break. It is called the OMES PASSPORT TO LEARNING. Third, fourth and fifth grade students will be given their passports. They will use IXL Math and Science skills practice to stay abreast of skills and standards students must know to achieve grade level standards mastery in the area of math and science. On the passport, students will check off what they have completed and passed. Third, fourth and fifth grade students will need to read, daily for at least 30 min. per day. When school re-opens, we are expecting students to take at least one AR Test.

Kindergarten through second grade students will come home with a PASSPORT To LEARNING Packet. This packet should be completed in its entirety. Kindergarten through 2nd grade students are also to work on their i-Ready path to learning for 30 min. per day.

When students return to school on Monday, January 4th, they should bring their, PASSPORTS (3-5), PACKETS (K-2.) Both the i-Ready progress and the IXL progress will be checked and verified by classroom teachers. Students will of course take the AR Tests on the books they read when we return to school. Students will be rewarded according to their participation with Manatee Money and or an OMES DREAM TEAM BUFF. They are sooooo cool!

Our students have worked very hard this year to bridge learning from the last quarter of the 2019 – 2020 school year, three months of summer and nearly 4 months of school year 2020 – 2021. Though participation in this incentive is optional, we are hoping you will find it as vitally important as we do and choose to support our efforts.

Look to receive the 3rd – 5th Grade PASSPORT TO LEARNING and the K-2 PASSPORT PACKET during the last week of school before the Christmas/Winter holiday break.

Direct questions to our building Learning Leaders, Mrs. Raynor, assistant principal and Mrs. Keaton, principal.

As usual, OMES families, thank you for your support.

