



# OMES at-a-Glance



## News for Otis A. Mason Families

April 2024

207 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086  
(904) 547-8440 – main  
(904) 547-8445 – fax

Mrs. Monique Keaton, Principal  
Mrs. Julie Hudson, Assistant Principal  
Ms. Marie Antoine, Assistant Principal

### Manatee Highlight: Our Guidance Team



Our Guidance Team at Otis A. Mason includes (pictured from left to right) School Counselors Mrs. Sierra Schnell and Mrs. Nicole Ribeiro and the Guidance Clerk, Mrs. Danie Waler. Together they work to support our students with social-emotional learning, mental health, character education, and coping skills. Growing and learning is hard work, and our team is here to support our manatees in their journey! We asked our team,

What are three things you want parents to know about our school?

1. We are a community of learners that embrace Character Counts! every day!
2. We are a team with YOU and our staff to support your child the best way we can!
3. Otis A. Mason is a warm welcoming environment that promotes confidence and success!

What are resources you recommend for parents?

1. [Our SJCS D Counseling website](#) for suggestions, contacts, resources to support your family
2. Read, read, read! Use children's literature to teach social-emotional development. Here are a couple suggestions:
  - a. [A Little SPOT Series](#) by: Diane Alber
  - b. [Julia Cook book series](#)
3. [Character Counts](#) at home too! Please make good character a part of your home discussions and use the website for more guidance.

Please call us if you have questions or concerns. Team Mason!

### Character Highlight: How can I instill good character in my child?

We will be reviewing **ALL of the pillars of character** in your child's classroom. We here at Otis A. Mason Elementary believe that every member of our community should **strive to have good character.**

- **Citizenship**

Is your child old enough to learn how to care for your American flag or a community space? Are they ready to explore age-appropriate news and community events? Could your family participate in a community cleanup?

- **Responsibility**

Post a chore list on the fridge and give your child the power to complete those chores as a responsible member of the family. Consider a family game night as a reward!

- **Fairness**

Help your child create fair rules for play and for the household. What is a fair way to share family decision making? Who will pick the restaurant this time? Who decides which book the family will read together?

- **Caring**

Show gratitude at the dinner table. Take turns sharing what you are grateful for.

- **Trustworthiness**

Show your child good examples of honesty. Highlight courageous acts of truth, especially when someone made a mistake. It is truly brave to atone for a mistake.

- **Respect**

Discuss what is respectful in various settings: the movie theater, the car, the classroom, the park. What is respectful when dealing with different people: a friend, a teacher, a waiter, a grandparent, a public servant?

**Have questions? Contact our Guidance Team (see left) at 904-547-8455. We are always available to support you with character education. Click here for our [guide to character education](#).**

## Technology Corner:

It is imperative that parents use online resources to support at home. Home Access Center is THE portal to use for grades, discipline issues, transportation, attendance, and scheduling. Anyone who would like to visit our campus MUST BE APPROVED via Keepntrack. Lastly, be sure to keep your email address up to date and to opt in for school texts, emails, and messages via School Messenger. Need help accessing one of our services online? Please see below for assistance.

### HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC):

HAC access is through the parent-provided email address and password. Please call the Front Office if you are having access issues (904-547-8440).

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/hac/>

**SCHOOL ACCESS FORM:** Background check to enter campus: [Stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply](https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/hac/)

**SCHOOL MESSENGER:** Opt-in to school messages here: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/schoolmessenger/>

## Summer Camps at OMES

Otis A. Mason will be hosting a few summer camp opportunities for students. Our "Extended Day" Run camps are \$25 to register and \$175 to attend.

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>: Under the Sea Camp** for K through 5 (sponsored by our Extended Day staff). Contact Melinda Stevens if interested at [Melinda.stevens@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Melinda.stevens@stjohns.k12.fl.us)

**June 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>: Green Thumb Camp** for K through 5 (sponsored by our Extended Day staff). Contact Melinda Stevens if interested at [Melinda.stevens@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Melinda.stevens@stjohns.k12.fl.us).

**June 17<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>: SJCCA Fine Arts Camp** for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Contact [Jennette.Knoblauch@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Jennette.Knoblauch@stjohns.k12.fl.us) to register as space is limited. This camp is free.

**2024 Elementary FINE ARTS SUMMER CAMP**  
@ 207 Mason Manatee Way  
**FREE!**

Music  
Puppetry  
Dance  
& more...

**CONTACT US:** ✉ [Jennette.Knoblauch@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Jennette.Knoblauch@stjohns.k12.fl.us) 📍 207 Mason Manatee Way

## Otis A. Mason Wins the 2023-2024 Battle of the Books!



We are so proud of our hardworking Battle of the Books team led by our very own Ms. Wendi Allen! Our school was presented with the victor's banner (pictured above). Thank you for exploring the SSYRA books for this school year with us. The new book list is here, check it out! To see a list and description of books for this year and the years past, please check out this website:

<https://www.floridamediaed.org/ssyra.html>



## Congratulations, Mrs. C!



Join us in congratulating our Art Teacher, Mrs. Counts-Cacchione, in winning a classroom grant from INK! ([Investing in Kids!](#)). Check out and support this amazing organization that supports our teachers.



## New Manatees, Enroll now for the 2024-2025 School Year!

Families, do you have a Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grader that you need to enroll at Otis A. Mason Elementary for the 2024-2025 school year? Are you currently attending our school through a hardship waiver? DON'T WAIT! Complete your registration and upload your forms NOW. Please call 904-547-8436 with questions.

We also offer Early Childhood/VPK services, our program still has a few spots remaining for the 2024-2025 school year so enroll your child TODAY! Spots are limited.

Please register online NOW: <http://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/registration/>

To renew a hardship waiver for the 2024-2025 school year: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/schoolservices/transfers/>



## 2024-2025 School Year Meet the Teacher Event-Save the Date!

Our teachers cannot wait to meet their new students for the 2024-2025 school year! Our Meet the Teacher Event will be: **Thursday, August 8<sup>th</sup>** for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Multi-Aged Self-Contained students in K-3 (MASC ESE)

**Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup>** for 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades and Multi-Aged Self-Contained students in 4-5 (MASC ESE).

Do you have questions for the new school year? [Check out our website](#). Do you have questions regarding our standards and curriculum? Check out our [curriculum maps](#) and [pacing guides](#) here. How about questions [regarding the Café menu](#) and information regarding [free breakfast and lunch service](#)? What about [transportation questions](#) or assistance with a transportation hardship? Need help with enrollment or have registration questions? [Check it out!](#) School supply lists will be updated soon. [Here are our lists from last year](#). We are so excited for next year!



## OMES Competes at the Character Cup



The Otis A. Mason Character Cup Team did an incredible job representing our school at the district level with GREAT character. We are so proud of our team!



## Outstanding Volunteers Honored at District Event



Thank you to our 2023-2024 Outstanding Volunteers for all of your time, love, and energy that you have dedicated to our school! The SJCS and OMES are so grateful. While Joyce Luker, Brenda Kelley, and Dominic Fazzino were honored as our senior, adult, and junior outstanding volunteers, we have to thank ALL of our numerous volunteers for sharing your time, talent, and treasure with us. We are excited to honor our volunteers and the Volunteer recognition breakfast on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you, volunteers!

## Important Dates:

**April 22-26:** Administrative Professionals Week

**May 1:** School Principal Appreciation Day

**May 1-5:** Teacher Appreciation Week

**May 12:** Chick-fil-A Spirit Night 5-8pm

**May 13:** K-2 Field Day (Rescheduled)

**May 14:** Goodwill Bag It Up-Bring Donations 7:30-8:30am

**May 15:** Class of 2024 Grad Walk and Senior Social

**May 16:** SAC Meeting 3:30pm in the Media Center

**May 22:** PTO Meeting 3:30pm in the Media Center



## The Bag it Up for Goodwill Donation Challenge

**Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 8-9:00am**

On May 14<sup>th</sup> we will have a donation drive during morning drop off for Goodwill. Bring your gently used items to school and drop them off with the staff from Goodwill between 7:30am and 9:00am. Our school will earn \$2,000 for participating and the class with the most donations will get a pizza party!

 **GOODWILL** INDUSTRIES OF NORTH FLORIDA **School Donation Drive**  
**Donating does great things in your community!**



**Otis A. Mason Elementary**  
**Tuesday, May 14 – 8-9 a.m.**

**Parents/Guardians:** Here's your chance to get a jump on Spring Cleaning. When you get your student ready for school that morning, make sure they have their donations with them. Donations will be accepted at drop-off. They won't have to carry them around all day. Your student will earn a prize for their donation. Thank you for helping us help the community.

Goodwill Industries of North Florida

## Attention Manatee Alumni Senior Class of 2024: Grad Walk is May 15th



Are you a senior in high school graduating in 2024? Did you attend Otis A. Mason Elementary School as a 5<sup>th</sup> grader in 2016-2017? You are invited to an incredible event to celebrate YOU! Come to Otis A. Mason on May 15<sup>th</sup> and meet in the Media Center in your cap and gown.

**12:30-1pm: Inquiring Manatees want to know...**take part in a Q & A with our current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students!

**1-1:30pm: Grad Walk** Proudly walk the halls of Otis A. Mason as you inspire our current students.

**1:30-3:15pm: Senior Social** Spend time with your fellow Manatee alumni and some familiar OMES faculty and staff faces.

[RSVP HERE TODAY](#) or by phone at 904-547-8440

## Returning Student Verification (RSV)

This month the St. John's County School District will email guardians regarding returning students. **Please make sure the email we have on file for you is correct** in our eSchool system. Please take your time and **thoroughly read through your RSV**. The system does save your input from the last time you filled it out (but it will not include changes that you made throughout the school year). Make sure the information included, emergency contacts listed, and medical information input is the most up-to-date. Due to the volume of students, the RSV is emailed in stages by grade. Please do not worry if you see an RSV for one student, but not another, it is coming-please, be patient. Once we have attempted to reach the primary guardian listed in eSchool, the RSV will automatically be emailed to the secondary guardian on file. The emails will be repeated until one guardian has successfully submitted the RSV. If you have questions regarding the returning student verification, please contact our Registrar and Computer Operator, Mrs. Darby Roberts at 904-547-8436.





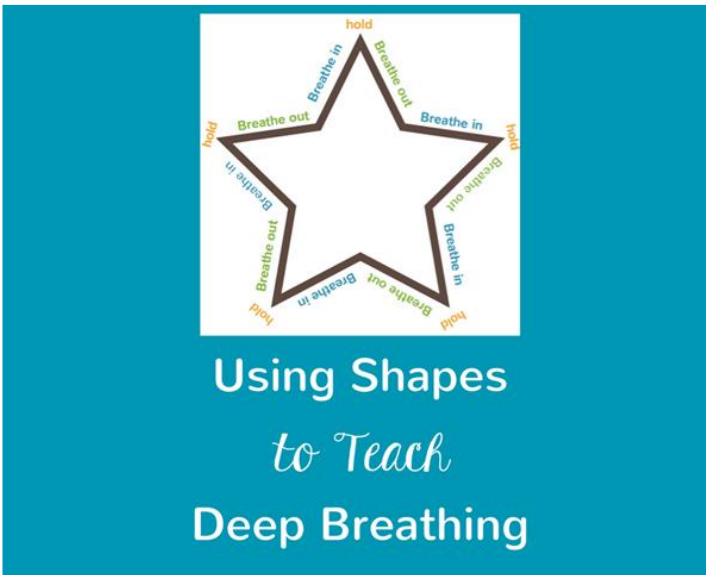
## Attention ESE Families, Your Input Needed:

The St. Johns County School District continually strives to improve. Please help us get better by completing this survey regarding your experience in our Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs. The survey is open to all parents of students with an IEP receiving ESE services from preschool age to grade 12. Individual responses are confidential.

To access the survey directly, go to the [2024 ESE Parent Survey](#).

For questions, contact Patricia Bodiford, senior educational program director, Instructional Support Services, at [Patricia.Bodiford@fldoe.org](mailto:Patricia.Bodiford@fldoe.org) or 850-245-0475.

## Guidance Corner: Calming Strategies for Your Child



**What is STAR Breathing?** – It promotes relaxation and self-regulation. Deep breathing helps to bring more oxygen into the bloodstream. It has a physical effect on the body and helps the individual to calm down. STAR breathing is an easy exercise to practice at home and school.

Have your child trace a star graphic (like the one above) with their finger while breathing in through their nose and out through their mouth. Encourage them by modeling it with them and breathing slowly and deeply.

**Here are more calming strategies for kids who like to move:**

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Go for a jog/exercise together            | Blowing Bubbles          |
| Dance together                            | Play a sport together    |
| Spend time outside                        | Go for a bike ride       |
| Build something                           | Cook or bake together    |
| Pick wildflowers                          | Hunt for insects         |
| Make art together                         | Play with the family pet |
| Walk together while enjoying an audiobook |                          |

## A Word from Our Incredible PTO: Upcoming Events and Opportunities

We have so many exciting events coming up and numerous opportunities to support our Manatee students and staff. Email us for questions or to volunteer at [otismasonpto@gmail.com](mailto:otismasonpto@gmail.com)



**TEST PROCTORS NEEDED:** April through May (all grades) Please [review the presentation here](#) and [sign up here](#).

**SPIRIT ROCK:** [Click here](#) to reserve it.

**BIRTHDAY MARQUEE:** [Click here](#) to reserve it.

### PTO MEETINGS

📍 May 22nd 3:30pm in the Media Center 🖥️ Meet Us Virtually [by clicking here](#).

**STOCK THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE:** [Click here](#) to sign up.

### PTO SPONSORED EVENTS

**May 6-10: Teacher Appreciation Week**

Help us roll out the red carpet for our teachers! [Sign up here to help](#).

**May 24: Spirit Night at Captain Cones, 3pm-6pm**

## A CONVERSATIONAL GUIDE FOR Parents

BEFORE SCHOOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are you looking forward to at school this week/today?</li> <li>• What is something kind you could do for yourself or a classmate today?</li> <li>• What was your favorite part of the weekend you can share with your class?</li> </ul>
RELATED TO READING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What book are you reading in class?</li> <li>• What is a reading strategy you can use when you get stuck on a word?</li> <li>• What do you think will happen next in the book?</li> <li>• Does this book remind you of anything?</li> </ul>
RELATED TO MATH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are you learning about in Math?</li> <li>• Is there anything you are finding hard to understand?</li> <li>• Is there something you think you need more practice with?</li> <li>• What is something you did well in Math today?</li> </ul>
SOCIALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your favorite recess activity?</li> <li>• Who did you play with/hang out with at recess today?</li> <li>• If you have an issue with a classmate/friend at recess how could you solve the problem?</li> <li>• Tell me about the best part of your day.</li> </ul>
AFTER SCHOOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is something you are looking forward to tomorrow?</li> <li>• Can you show me/teach me something you learned today?</li> <li>• Did you need help with anything today?</li> <li>• Is there anything I can do to support you?</li> </ul>