



OMES at-a-Glance



News for Otis A. Mason Families August 2024-Procedures Edition

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Hey Manatee Families, Let's Connect!

OMES-at-a-Glance Newsletter: This is our Otis A. Mason monthly newsletter. We do our best to condense a month's worth of information that you need to know into a two-to-four-page newsletter. Our goal is to keep you abreast of school happenings in addition to the weekly communications you receive from your student's teacher.

Email: Please use our website to email the school general mailbox (mes@stjohns.k12.fl.us) or feel free to email your child's teacher regarding important information at firstname.lastname@stjohns.k12.fl.us. Please allow two business days for a response. Remember that our teachers' full attention is expected to be on our students and not email. Your patience and support is greatly appreciated. Don't like email?
Mail, Telephone, and Fax: Please see our above contact information to contact us the old-fashioned way!

Website: <https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>
Our website is a great FIRST stop for all things Otis A. Mason. Check it out today!

HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC): HAC access is through the parent-provided email address and password or your child's S number and password. Please call the Front Office if you are having access issues (547-8440).
<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/hac/>

Schoology: <https://stjohnsschools.schoology.com/home>
Fifth-grade teachers use Schoology to post assignments, resources, and calendars. Check it out!

PTO: Join our incredible Parent-Teacher Organization TODAY! Follow them on Facebook at **OtisMasonPTO** or email them at otismasonpto@gmail.com **SAC:** The Student Advisory Committee is a wonderful way to support and improve our school. Have your voice heard and learn about our curriculum initiatives. Email otismasonsac@gmail.com or come by one of our monthly meetings. Our website has more information.

SCHOOL ACCESS FORM needs to be completed by all new visitors to our schools: Background check to enter campus: [Stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply](https://stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply) There is a link

SCHOOL MESSENGER: You can control the Opt-in to school text messages, emails, and phone calls here: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/schoolmessenger/>

Character Highlight: What is Character Counts?

The Six Pillars of Character™



Every month our school highlights and teaches a different pillar of character. Why is character so important? Good character is the very foundation of a civil society, and it is what we would like to define us as a community. We here at Otis A. Mason Elementary believe that every parent, student, teacher, and member of our community should **strive to be a Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, and Caring Citizen.**

- **Trustworthiness:** How can we teach our children to “do the right thing” even when no one is watching? Value honesty even when you or your child make a mistake.
- **Respect:** How can we teach our children to deal with difference, anger, and disagreements respectfully? Model anger management, compromise, and tolerance for your children. Highlight the importance of diversity in our world. Different solutions, different opinions, and different people make the world a better place! People can disagree and still be cordial to one another.
- **Responsibility:** Foster responsibility in your child by holding them accountable for their actions. **Children should have age-appropriate, daily responsibilities in the household.**
- **Fairness:** Though we may teach children that “Life’s not fair” it is important to instill fairness in our actions. Help children to follow the rules and apply them fairly and justly. **Encourage sharing, taking turns, being open-minded, listening to one another, and supporting each other in times of conflict.**
- **Caring:** Teach, demonstrate, and expect kindness, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and charity. **Helping others is humbling and fulfilling.**
- **Citizenship:** How can you demonstrate to your child what it means to be an informed, active, obedient citizen? **How does one obey and respect the law?**

At Otis A. Mason, YOUR CHARACTER COUNTS!

OMES Procedures

School starts promptly at 8:25am. From 8:25am forward ALL Faculty and Staff have duties inside of the school and cannot assist outside. If you arrive at 8:25am or later, be prepared to park and walk your child into the Front Office.

Daily Parent Pick-up and Drop-off:

- Use the BLUE placard provided to pick up your Pre-K and multi-aged ESE classroom student and siblings. This pick-up location is at the first entrance next to the Café.
- Use the YELLOW placard provided to pick up students in all other grades using the second entrance to our school. Gate will remain closed until 2:30pm.
- Parents MUST remain in vehicle. Students MUST exit/enter through the passenger side
- ONLY adults and safety patrols on duty will open doors and assist students.
- Follow the flow of traffic and directions from our ushers
- Cell phone usage is PROHIBITED in the loops
- Please be kind and patient as our school community works hard to serve you 😊

Tardies and Early Dismissals:

Tardy? Have an appointment or an emergency? We understand that things happen sometimes, and we are happy to assist. Be sure to turn in a NOTE to excuse the tardy. Students must be walked into the Front Office. **Be the champion in your child's life and have them at school, on time, every day before 8:25am.**

Early Dismissal? The last possible time to pick up a child early from school is 2:15pm (1:15pm on Wednesdays). Parents that arrive after this time will have to wait for regular dismissal to pick up their child. Please bring your ID as well. Only an adult with an ID that is on your child's pick-up list will be authorized to check the student out. There are no exceptions to this. Please bring a note to excuse the dismissal when your child returns to school.

Entering our Campus?

EVERY ADULT ON OUR CAMPUS IS REQUIRED TO HAVE A BACKGROUND CHECK in order to be around our students. There are no exceptions to this rule. It is required by our district and our state. Make sure that every adult in your family has completed an application. If you have entered our campus and received a yellow badge, you have already been cleared. www.stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply



Create a Dismissal Routine for Your Child

Families, we need your help. IT IS SO IMPORTANT THAT BOTH YOUR CHILD AND YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER KNOWS YOUR FAMILY'S DISMISSAL ROUTINE. We understand that many children have two homes and many extracurricular activities (which makes your help all the more important!). Please talk to your child regularly (every day!) about how they are to come home. We never want a child to feel confused about how they are supposed to go home. In addition, your teacher should know your child's dismissal routine from Meet the Teacher. If you have not already communicated the regular routine for your child's dismissal, please email your child's teacher immediately. If there is an emergency, please complete the Dismissal Change Form (see below).

Dismissal Changes? Please help us keep a consistent and routine dismissal for your child. Make sure your child (and your child's teacher) knows how he/she will be dismissed routinely. If there is a change, please submit a [Dismissal Change Form](#) to our website by 2:10pm that day (1:10pm on Wednesdays). DO NOT send a handwritten note or an email to the teacher or call on the phone. We need the Front Office, the Dismissal Team, substitutes, and teachers to know and our form is the easiest way. Finally, please keep dismissal changes to a minimum. We understand that things change, and emergencies happen, but the safety of our students is a priority. Excessive dismissal changes create confusion for everyone. Thank you for your support!

Important Dismissal Facts to Know:

- Your child may only ride the bus that they are assigned to (check HAC to verify the bus information)
- If your child needs a second bus or alternate bus stop, please complete the SJCS District Provisional Transportation Waiver.
- Please be at the bus stop 10 minutes early and give the bus 10 minutes grace before calling us with questions.
- We cannot give pick-up placards to anyone other than the child's guardian.
- Anyone with a placard MUST show ID in the Front Office in order to pick up a child.
- Arrival and dismissal times are very busy. We do our very best not to interrupt arrival or dismissal routines in the classroom.

Electronic Device Policy:

Just a reminder that Otis A. Mason follows the St. Johns County School District policies on electronic devices (phones, computers, smart watches etc). **All devices must be powered off and put away throughout the school day.** Thank you for your support.

Important Dates:

August 28: Pre-K Vision Screening

August 30: Passport to Summer Learning Party

September 2: Labor Day : NO SCHOOL

September 3: Raise Craze Pep Rally

September 6 & 9: Health Screenings for K, 1, 3

September 11: Patriot Day

September 11: Interims released on HAC

September 17: Girl Scouts will visit at lunch

September 19: SAC Meeting 3:30pm in the Media Center

September 20: Teacher Inservice Day-No classes for students

September 23: PTO Meeting 3:30pm in the Media Center

September 25: Boy Scouts will visit during lunch

Clinic News: Health Screenings

Health Screenings will be performed for all Kindergarten, 1st and 3rd graders at our school on September 6th and 9th.

If you wish to OPT OUT of a health screening for your child, please complete [an OPT-OUT FORM here](#).

If your child is sick, please refer to the St. Johns County School District Illness Guidelines found here: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/health/illness/> for general health concerns related to your child.

Need health forms? Does your child have a Medical Plan? Please see our website for forms and plans.

Should the pediatrician recommend your child stay home from school, please notify your child's teacher(s) of their upcoming absence. Upon return to school, a **parent or doctor's note must be provided to excuse the absence**.

If your child does not feel well or is exhibiting symptoms of illness, PLEASE keep your child home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without medicine. We love sharing, but we don't share illness!

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Education Acronyms: A Glossary

Do you ever get communications from our school and a teacher and wonder, 'what does THAT stand for'? Well, I am here to help! See below for a guide on our various educational abbreviations.

RTI: Response to Intervention Additional support for academics and/or behavior in the classroom. Students with an RTI plan will receive additional support.

MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Support Most RTI plans consist of an MTSS approach. In other words, extra support inside the classroom, outside the classroom, and potentially at other times of day.

PTO: Parent-Teacher Organization A group of volunteers who bridge the home to school connection. Join this group of extraordinary education supporters!

SAC: Student Advisory Committee Another group of parent and teacher volunteers to assist us with school improvement

ESE: Exceptional Student Education Exceptional Student programs include but are not limited to: language, vision, hearing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, gifted, hospital homebound, Sensory, and many others

IEP: Individualized Education Program An IEP is a legal document designed to meet your child's unique educational needs. If you think your child may need additional support, please speak to your pediatrician about an evaluation. An IEP is written based on evaluated need.

504: This plan is named for section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A 504 plan gives students extra support in the classroom when needed. Please speak to your guidance counselor if you feel that your student may need additional support in the classroom for anxiety or other social-emotional needs not in an IEP.

PPU: Parent Pick Up is just an often-abbreviated way of saying a child will be a car rider in the afternoons

ILC: Instructional Literacy Coach Our instructional coaches this year are Ms. Hunting and Ms. Jaffa. These coaches assist and support our teachers with specialized knowledge in their given fields.

AP: Assistant Principal Our assistant principals this year are Ms. Antoine and Mrs. Hudson. They assist Mrs. Keaton, our principal, with the running of our school