



# OMES at-a-Glance



## News for Otis A. Mason Families November 2024

207 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086  
(904) 547-8440 – main  
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Mrs. Monique Keaton, Principal  
Ms. Marie Antoine, Assistant Principal  
Ms. Julie Hudson, Assistant Principal

### Manatee Highlight: UNITED in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade



*Pictured left to right: Mrs. Steen, Mrs. Byrd, Mrs. Barricklow, Ms. Bendt, Mr. Fairchild, Mr. Gonzalez, Mrs. Thomspn, Mrs. Jaffa*

Congratulations, 5<sup>th</sup> grade families! What an exciting year. Be sure to read your fifth-grader's daily communications about academic progress and what you can do at home to best support your child academically. In addition, 5<sup>th</sup> grade sends home weekly communications regarding upcoming dates and current curriculum. 5th grade is a challenging year and there are high expectations for your child's success. Please use this link to view the 5th grade curriculum maps for all subjects:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/year-at-a-glance/>

Please encourage your student to READ, READ, READ!  
There are so many free resources at our public library:  
<https://sjcpls.org/>

#### Important Dates for 5<sup>th</sup> graders:

Planetarium in school fieldtrip: **Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Gamble Fieldtrip: **Feb 11<sup>th</sup>**

Whitney Lab Fieldtrip – Byrd-**Feb 18<sup>th</sup>**

Whitney Lab Fieldtrip – Steen- **Feb 25<sup>th</sup>**

Whitney Lab Fieldtrip – Thompson-**Feb 27<sup>th</sup>**

Whitney Lab Fieldtrip – Barricklow-**Mar 5<sup>th</sup>**

Field Day-**Mar 11<sup>th</sup>**

Sea World Field Trip-**Mar 13<sup>th</sup>**

Whitney Lab Fieldtrip - Gonzalez-**Apr 10<sup>th</sup>**

### Character Highlight: UNITED in Citizenship



What does it mean to be a good citizen? Please join us in demonstrating the importance of citizenship to our students. We here at Otis A. Mason Elementary believe that every parent, student, teacher, and member of our community should **strive to be a good citizen. How can we accomplish that TOGETHER?**

- **Consider good citizenship in your household:** How can every family member contribute to the household? Make a list of age-appropriate chores and responsibilities for every member of the family. Allow your child to see the importance of every role and contribution.
- **Discuss good citizenship at school:** how can parents and students contribute to our Otis A. Mason community to make the school a better place? You are an important part of our school!
- **Demonstrate what it means to be a good neighbor:** how can we serve those who need us in our neighborhood? What age-appropriate tasks could our Manatees help with? How can we politely acknowledge our neighbors when we see them? Even a smile can be an act of neighborly love!
- **Support students in the decision-making process:** Guide them to make choices that protect the safety and rights of others. Does that choice leave a place better than we found it? Include their voice in appropriate decisions.
- **Lead by example:** protect the environment, get involved, vote, CARE! Take to your child about what matters to your family.

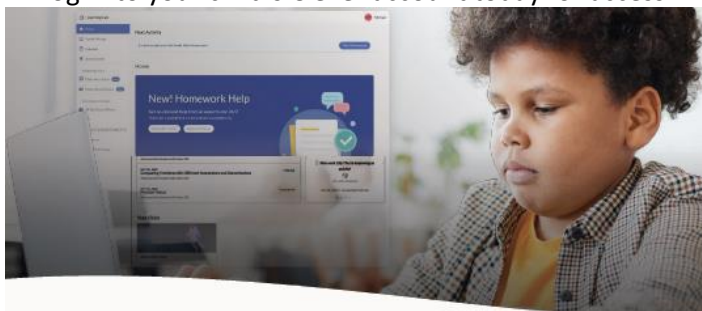
Teachers will be providing lessons that discuss the importance of citizenship at our school, in our home, and in our community. We are so proud of our students and the work they do every day to nurture their character.

Thank you for helping to make the world a better place, Manatees! For more Character Counts! curriculum and ideas, check out the website with curriculum, themes, and activities online at:

<https://ccstjohns.com/>

## Varsity Tutors: Free Resource for You

Log in to your child's Clever account today for access.



### You Now Have Access to Powerful Learning Resources with Varsity Tutors for Schools

AVAILABLE FOR EVERY STUDENT

#### Powerful District-Wide Resources

Every student in the district can take advantage of powerful learning resources, at no cost, including weekly Live Online Classes, On Demand 24/7 Chat Tutoring, Essay Editing, Celebrity-Led StarCourses, and Self Study resources like recorded content, practice problems, and adaptive diagnostic tests

- ✓ 24/7 On-Demand Chat Tutoring
- ✓ Live Group Classes
- ✓ On-Demand Essay Review
- ✓ Celebrity-Led StarCourse Classes
- ✓ Self-Study & Practice Problems
- ✓ College & Career Readiness
- ✓ Enrichment Classes
- ✓ Adaptive Assessments & Personalized Learning Plans



"The Varsity Tutors platform resources really helped my child succeed this school year."

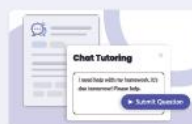
Patty S.  
K-12 Parent

### The most comprehensive suite of live, online tutoring resources.

Our school district has partnered with Varsity Tutors for Schools to provide students a suite of effective online learning resources that cover grades K-12. Students can get extra homework help or prepare for the next big test whenever they need it.



Learn More!



24/7 On-Demand Chat Tutoring



Live Group Classes



SAT & ACT Test Prep Classes



Celebrity-Led StarCourse Classes



College & Career Readiness



On-Demand Essay Review



Enrichment Classes



Self-Study & Practice Problems



Practice Tests & Personalized Learning Plans

## Technology Corner: How do I Access?

Need help accessing one of our services online? Remember that most online resources for school can be accessed through our website using CLEVER:

<https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>

Click CLEVER and enter your student's s# and password.

**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). Students have access to HAC with their student ID number and password. <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/hac/>

**SCHOOL ACCESS FORM** (for volunteering): Only apply if you have not done so before. Only apply once! It is good for three years at any school in the district. [Stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply](https://stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply) Do you already have an account, but you need to be renewed? Call us! 904-547-8440.

### ACCELERATED READER HOME CONNECT:

<https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/media/>

**SCHOOL MESSENGER:** Opt-in to school messages here:

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

**How do I change my child's dismissal?** Use the Dismissal Change Form on our website (which is also linked here).

<https://surveys.stjohns.k12.fl.us/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=mesdismissal#>



## Leonard's Photography

Order your yearbook here: [www.buytheyearbook.com](http://www.buytheyearbook.com). Please contact Leonard's Photography for all of your school photo and yearbook needs. Parents still have the ability to get their child photographed in the Spring (even if you missed the original Picture Day *and* retakes).

**Spring Picture Day** will be February 25<sup>th</sup>.  
**Club Picture Day** will be February 28<sup>th</sup>.

*Leonard's*



## Holiday Celebration at the Amp



### 2nd Annual Holiday Celebration at the Saint Augustine Amphitheatre

**Entry:** Donate canned food/non-perishable food items (This event has no charge!). Donated items benefit the St. Francis House.

**Date:** Saturday, December 7th

**Time:** Gates open at 5pm; Movie starts at 7pm (first 300 kids get a Free t-shirt)

**Why?** Santa, Face Painting, Fairy Hair, Snow, activities, and FREE popcorn and hot chocolate for all kids! Support St. Francis House by donating canned goods at entry.

## Important Dates for your Calendar:

**Nov 18th:** PTO/SAC Meeting at 3:15pm in the Media Center

**Nov 20<sup>th</sup>:** National Education Support Professionals Day: Thank the support staff in your child's life.

**Nov 21<sup>st</sup>:** Tropical Smoothie Spirit Night 4-8pm

tropical **CAFE**  
SMOOTHIE

**Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Guest Teacher Appreciation Day! Thank you substitutes.

**Nov 25<sup>th</sup>-Nov 29<sup>th</sup>:** Thanksgiving Break; No School

**Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> -Dec 6<sup>th</sup>:** PTO Holiday Shop

**Dec 10<sup>th</sup>:** McDonald's Spirit Night 4-8pm



**Dec 20<sup>th</sup>:** Early Release; End of Quarter 2/Semester 1

**Dec 21<sup>st</sup>-Jan 5<sup>th</sup>:** Winter Break; No School



Otis A. Mason Elementary

# PTO/SAC MEETINGS

October 28, 2024  
November 18, 2024  
January 27, 2025  
February 24, 2025  
March 24, 2025  
April 28, 2025

All meetings will be combined PTO/SAC meetings at 3:15pm - 4:30pm and are held in the OMES media center, unless otherwise specified.



**Breakfast  
and  
Lunch  
at  
No Cost**

- Fresh fruits and vegetables offered daily
- Whole-grain bread products
- Milk and Juice selections

- Only for students attending school at this location.
- No meal application is needed.
- Smart snack approved ala carte is available for purchase.

Contact the school cafeteria manager for additional info.

Our focus in Child Nutrition is to provide the ingredients to create an optimal environment for your child's growth and development. We look forward to a great year ahead!

**\*\*This institution is an equal opportunity provider\*\***

## Counselor's Corner: 9 Ways to Cultivate Courage in Kids

1. **Model Courage:** *Kids who watch their parents stick their necks out to do the right thing are more likely to do the same.* Let your child see you step out of your comfort zone, whether it is tackling your fear of heights or speaking up to your boss. Then express how good it feels when you conquer your fears instead of taking a shortcut. Kids learn to take on challenges they face from witnessing how you tackle your own fears and achieve good.
2. **Talk About Values and Courage:** *Research finds that kids are more likely to be courageous if they believe that their parents expect them to support those in need.* Discuss bravery with your children. Tell them, "Courage is making the choice to do what you know is right even if you are afraid." Some parents develop a family courage mantra like "We find courage to do what's right, even if it's hard." Another belief to instill in your family, "Our family speaks up and helps others."
3. **Stop Rescuing Your Kids:** *Always fixing children's problems only makes them more dependent and reduces their ability to bravely seek their own solutions.* It also sends a disturbing message: "I'll help because you can't do it alone." If you're over-helping start building your child's courage muscles by putting them in the driver's seat. They (not you) tell their coach they can't make practice or maybe they apologize to a friend without your assistance.
4. **Encourage Your Kids to Share Their Acts of Bravery:** *Learning to be brave takes practice; so encourage your children to do something courageous everyday like introducing themselves to someone new, inviting a new classmate to play, or standing up for a peer.* Be sure to take time to focus on their courageous breakthroughs. Have your child list their "brave successes" on strips of paper and make "courage chains" and then share their tales of courage at the dinner table.
5. **Dispel the "Superman Myth":** *Many kids assume they need to look like a superhero to be courageous; but ANYONE can be brave!* Share stories of those who changed the world with their quiet, nonphysical, brave acts. Jackie Robinson, the first African American Major League Baseball player was heckled because of the color of his skin. He showed great bravery by persevering and conducting himself in a professional manner on the field where he excelled as a hero both on and off the field. Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of nonviolent civil disobedience in India, ran home everyday because he was too shy to talk to anyone. Even the well-known Civil Rights activist Rosa Parks was described as "soft spoken...timid and shy."
6. **Read about Courageous Kids:** *Share inspiring news and stories about brave children.* Some of my favorite books for younger kids are "Courage" by Bernard Waber and "Brave Irene" by William Steig (or for older kids "Wringer" by Jerry Spinelli and "Stand up for Yourself and your Friends" by Patti Kelley Criswell and Angela Martini.
7. **Encourage Young Kids to Take Brave Baby Steps:** *Instead of picking her daughter up, a friend of mine helped her 3-year-old find the courage to cross a small bridge by empowering her.* "Be brave, Clara," she told her daughter. "You can do it!" she said, and her daughter repeated "You can do it!" to herself. Guess what she learned when she crossed that bridge? "I am brave, Mom!" she said.
8. **Teach Kids to Prioritize Safety:** *Even as we teach our children to be brave, it is important to temper risk-taking.* Safety is always our first priority. If there is ever a significant risk to someone's health, teach your child to get an adult or call 9-1-1 if needed. Encourage children to trust their instincts if they feel that something or someone is unsafe.
9. **Teach your Kids How to Reduce Their Fears** *If not kept in check, fear can be overwhelming.* Teach your child simple strategies to be brave. You might encourage positive self-talk, such as saying, "I can handle this," or "I have courage to do this." Teach your child to take slow, deep breaths to find courage. Research finds that younger children are more likely to share their fears with another child. Though you always want to be open with them, let them know that it is okay to share worries with a friend.

This article, "Nine Ways to Cultivate Courage in Kids" was curated by our School Counselor, Mrs. Nicole Ribeiro. For more information and to read more, use the link below:

[Nine Ways to Cultivate Courage in Kids - Character Counts!](#)



**NOVEMBER**  
**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MONTH**