



# OMES at-a-Glance



## News for Otis A. Mason Families

October 2025

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Mrs. Monique Keaton, Principal  
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### Manatee Highlight: Come Aboard the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Voyage!

**Hi First Grade Families!** We are SO excited to spend this year with your amazing kiddos! Our first-grade team is a creative, energetic, and fun group of teachers and friends that love to make learning come alive. In our classrooms, we believe that learning should feel like an adventure filled with **wonder, laughter, and discovery!** We know that building strong relationships is the heart of everything we do. When teachers, students, and families work together, the magic happens, and our kids truly shine!

Our goal is to create meaningful experiences that help each child grow academically, socially, and emotionally. We celebrate every success (big and small) and believe that **ALL students can learn, grow, and feel proud of themselves.** We're not just preparing students for first grade, we're helping them build skills and confidence that will carry them through the many grades to come! We're so thankful to have YOU as our partners on this exciting journey. Here's to a year full of smiles, learning, and lots of "first grade fun"!

#### Fun Ways to Help Your 1st Grader at Home!

1. **Read Together Every Day** Snuggle up and read a book with your child. Talk about the story and ask fun questions like "What do you think will happen next?"
2. **Play with Words** Practice sight words and letter sounds with flashcards or games. Make it silly and exciting!
3. **Count Everything!** Count toys, snacks, or steps together. Try simple adding and subtracting with things you have around the house.
4. **Explore Outside** Go on a nature walk! Look at flowers, bugs, and trees. Chat about what you see and listen to your child's questions.
5. **Write Stories** Encourage your child to write about their day or their favorite things. Drawing pictures and writing go hand-in-hand!
6. **Measure and Compare** Use a ruler, measuring cups, or even paper clips to measure toys or ingredients. Compare which is bigger, heavier, or longer.
7. **Ask and Wonder** Ask your child why they think something happens or what might happen next. It's a great way to spark their imagination!
8. **Practice Responsibility** Give your child simple jobs at home (set the table, feed the pet, pack your snack for school) to build independence.
9. **Take Turns** Play board games or card or card games as a family! It teaches patience and fairness.



#### Need a new book to read? Check out: Lower Grades Bookshelf:



## Character Highlight: Manatees are RESPONSIBLE!



Why is “RESPONSIBILITY” 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 responsible. How can we do that TOGETHER?**

- **Introduction:** How can we teach our child to be responsible for themselves and their actions? Perhaps we can guide them to not only be responsible for what they do, but also to take responsibility for causes they find to be important in our world. How can everyone contribute to improving the world around them?
- **Give clear, specific responsibilities to your child:** Give your child appropriate responsibilities and guide them in managing those responsibilities. These should be age-appropriate tasks and chores. Make sure that your child sees their contribution to family responsibilities and the household. Show your child that everyone has an important role and responsibility in the home including them!
- **Teach your child that caring and trying MATTERS:** We can't always get it right the first time and sometimes it is difficult to fulfill our responsibilities. It is okay to struggle & to ask for help sometimes! We can't fix most problems overnight, but taking the first step is important. If every person in the world picked up one piece of litter, there wouldn't be any!
- **Responsibility at School:** Have your child pack their backpack, make their lunch, or create school routines as their age allows. Teach them the importance of punctuality and cleaning up after themselves. Have them label their belongings and check Lost and Found regularly. Taking ownership of these tasks is crucial!

[The Character Counts! program](#) is taught to students during their school day. Please check out the curriculum, themes, and activities linked above.

### Limited Trunk Spaces Still Available!

Individually wrapped candy donations are now being accepted- feed our monster in the Front Office! [Sign up your vehicle to participate TODAY!](#)



### FREE Health Screenings 10/7

**ALL Kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd grade students will have FREE health screenings available to them.** Health Screenings will assess height, weight, hearing and vision. If you would like to opt-out (NOT have your child screened), please sign and return the form linked here. The State of Florida recommends that all children receive a health screening. If your child wears glasses, please make sure they bring them to school on Tuesday, 10/7. Don't want your child screened? Opt-Out here: [Health Screening OPT-OUT Form 2025-2026](#)

### Have a Safe October: Fire Safety and Child Safety Matters Assemblies

October is Fire Safety Month! Be sure to talk to your child about your family's fire safety plan. On Tuesday 10/14, all **Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, and MASC ESE** classes will be working with St. Johns County Fire Rescue about fire safety practices. If you would like your child to participate, [please submit a permission slip](#). In addition, **all students in K-5<sup>th</sup> grades** will participate in [Child Safety Matters](#) led by our School Counselors. This curriculum is required in the state of Florida. Please see the details of this [required instruction by grade level here](#).







**EXPERIENCE MASON!**

**Character Counts Week**  
October 20-24



**Monday, 10/20-Wear Red for CARING**  
**Tuesday, 10/21-Wear Orange for FAIRNESS**  
**Wednesday, 10/22-Wear Yellow or Green for Respect/Responsibility**  
**Thursday, 10/23-Wear Blue for Trustworthiness**  
**Friday, 10/24-Wear Purple for Citizenship**

At Otis A. Mason, YOUR Character Counts!

**Celebrate with us!**

**Red Ribbon Week**  
**October 27-31**

**A Week of Healthy, Kind Manatees!**

**Monday Oct. 27-You have the POWER to make healthy choices:  
Dress as a superhero**

**Tuesday, Oct. 28-My DREAMS, My Future:  
Dress as a job/career/occupation you'd like to have someday**

**Wednesday, Oct. 29-At OMES we are kind to ourselves and others:  
Wear your OMES spiritwear or school colors**

**Thursday, Oct. 30-Love Yourself Day, Be kind to your mind, you are important:  
Dress in your favorite outfit**

**Friday, Oct. 31-Spend time with people you care about and have fun:  
Wear a costume (All costumes must be Student Code of Conduct approved.)**

**Students, listen for special announcements during our Red Ribbon week! EXPERIENCE MASON!**

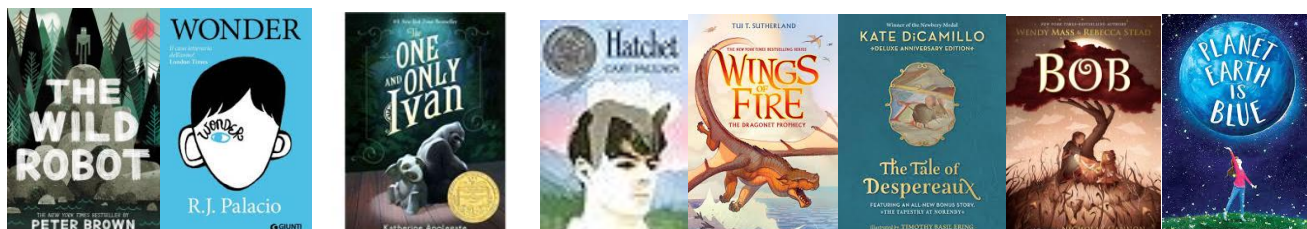
 For more information on the FL statute and resources regarding Red Ribbon Week please visit:  
**St. Johns County Schools Required Mental Health Instruction**  
[www.redribbonweek.org](http://www.redribbonweek.org)

## Congratulations to our 2025 Employees of the Year!



We are so happy to announce Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Tatman; Rookie Teacher of the Year, Ms. Sadler; & Employee of the Year, Ms. Heather. Thank you for all you do for our school, our families, and our students!

## Need a new book to read? Check it out: The Upper Grades Bookshelf





## Upcoming Events:

JOIN US FOR THE

# MASON VOYAGE

*Otis A. Mason Elementary*

OCTOBER 9, 2025

## CLASSROOM EXPLORATION

5:00 - 6:00 PM

*Set sail for an evening of discovery as your student and you navigate their academic journey, beginning in the classroom. Together, you'll chart the course through data and celebrate the milestones they've accomplished thus far.*

## TITLE I ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

6:00 - 7:30 PM

*Prepare to embark on a building-wide expedition—drop anchor at various learning ports and don't miss the treasure trove waiting at the Scholastic Book Fair!*

***Pizza, salad, cookie, and drinks will be served!***

*Destination...Student success merges together with Parents and OMES!!!*



OCTOBER 7, 2025

ST JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION  
PARENT ADVISORY

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL  
PRESENTATION

### FEATURING:

FAMILY NETWORK ON DISABILITIES (FND)  
DIRECTOR OF PARENTS OFFERING  
PARENTS INFORMATION & NETWORKING  
(POPIN), KATHY POWELL

### TOPIC:

**Building Bridges for  
Families:**

An Introduction to FND's POPIN Program

Join on your computer or mobile app via link below

**[Join the meeting now](#)**

Or call (audio only) 904-420-0831

Phone Conference ID: 151 255 677#

ST JOHNS COUNTY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



COME CONNECT WITH  
FLORIDA'S FAMILY  
NETWORK ON  
DISABILITIES. THE POPIN  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
WILL GUIDE YOU  
THROUGH THEIR  
RESOURCES AND SHARE  
HOW FAMILIES CAN  
FIND THE SUPPORT THEY  
NEED

10/7/2025

This meeting will  
be held via  
Microsoft Teams  
platform

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

## From our PTO: Save the Dates

OTIS A. MASON ELEMENTARY

# SPIRIT DAY

AT  
SYKES FAMILY FARMS  
**CROP MAZE**  
SATURDAY, 10/11/2025  
**10AM-10PM**  
\$15.00/PERSON ● KIDS 2 & UNDER FREE  
**USE CODE: MANATEES**  
FOR DISCOUNTED ONLINE TICKETS  
TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE IN PERSON  
JUST MENTION YOU'RE A MANATEE!  
A PORTION OF PROCEEDS BENEFITS OUR PTO

Join Us!

WHERE: MCDONALDS (37 EPIC BLVD)  
WHEN: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST  
TIME: 4:00PM-7PM

The teacher who has the most students attend will win FREE Happy Meals for their entire class! PLUS PTO will get 30% back from your purchase!

**McTeacher's Night**

Check out our website for all things PTO:

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

This includes ordering Spirit Wear: [Mason Spirit Wear: Click Here!](#) Reserving the Spirit Rock: [Click here to reserve it.](#) Getting your child's name on the Birthday Marquee: [Click here to reserve it.](#) Want to help stock the Teacher's Lounge? [please sign up here.](#)

There are so many opportunities to get connected:  
**[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: CLICK HERE!](#)**



## Boys and Girls Basketball Teams bring home the win! Come & See Us Play.



|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Otis A. Mason v. Webster @ RJ Murray Middle         | 9/30 @ 5:30pm   |
| Otis A. Mason v. Osceola @ RJ Murray Middle         | 10/2 @ 5:30pm   |
| Hartley v. Otis A. Mason @ Gamble Rodgers Middle    | 10/14 @ 5:30pm  |
| Southwoods v. Otis A. Mason @ Gamble Rodgers Middle | 10/28 @ 5:30pm  |
| Crookshank v. Otis A. Mason @ Gamble Rodgers Middle | 11/13 @ 5:30 pm |
| Tournament @ TBD                                    | 11/15           |

## How can I support my child's education?

**A child's needs are many, we can help!** Balanced meals; lots of water; quality, full nights of sleep, et cetera. Please reach out to us if you need assistance with this. Resources are available including free breakfast and lunch, weekend food bags, reusable water bottles, daily snacks, etc. Call 547-8440 and ask to speak to a school counselor. Our district has amazing support services for families in need! We are here to help you.

**Take the professional advice of your child's teacher:** Read twenty minutes per night with your child, support your child as they complete homework, use free and available resources through Clever and the St. Johns County Public Library System, attend conferences, spark your child's curiosity! Ask your child's teacher what you can do at home to support learning.

**Want to contribute to your child's educational journey?** Ask your child's teacher for a link to their Amazon Wishlist or Donor's Choose Project. Teachers always appreciate donations. Can't donate money? Teachers appreciate your time as well. Ask to volunteer in the classroom or to chaperone a field trip. Can't volunteer during the day? Teachers always appreciate help with copying, cutting and preparing classroom lessons and supplies, just ask!

**Join our Facebook Group, Otis Mason Elementary PTO, and connect to all of our school's Amazon Wishlists.**

There are so many ways to:

## Experience Mason!

## Celebrating Coach Hollister



**Happy National Athletic Staff Day! Coach Hollister** has been a leader in Physical Education for over 30 years. Shout out to our volunteer coaches, **Coach Norm & Coach Sarah** too. When your child has P.E., remind them to wear appropriate shoes & clothing, & bring a water bottle.

## Happy National Custodian Appreciation Day!



Our maintenance team is the BEST in the business. They work hard to make this school sparkle (and we'd sure be a mess without them!). Be sure to thank (pictured above left to right) **Mr. Larry, Mr. David, Mr. Chad, Ms. Diana, and Ms. Roxana**. The greatest gift to our team is speaking to your child about personal responsibility. Leaving every area BETTER than we found it is a group effort. Thank you, Maintenance Manatees, for taking care of us!

## Raise Craze Results: Congratulations to our Kind Kids!

Our community committed to kindness during our Raise Craze Fundraiser, and we are so proud of the kindness exhibited by students in school, on the bus, in the hallways and at home. Here are our totals:

**Total money raised: \$17,981**

**Acts of Kindness Completed: 1,267**



## Yearbook Cover Art Contest Winners:

Thank you to all of our amazing Manatee artists for your art submissions. Please keep an eye out for your work of art in the yearbook. Our winners are:

Front Cover Art: **Jameson Pratten**

Back Cover Art: **Lucy Sweeney and Nate Burcker**

## Scholastic Book Fair 10/9-10/17!



**10/9: SAC Meeting @3:15pm in the Media Center**

**10/10: First Quarter Ends**

**10/16: PTO Meeting @3:15pm in the Media Center**

**10/13: Teacher Planning Day: No classes for students**

**10/15: Boy Scout Info Meeting @6:30pm**

## Do you have that app? Connect with us via the app or website!

**DOWNLOAD THE PARENTSQUARE APP TODAY!**

STAY INVOLVED WITH YOUR STUDENT'S LEARNING AND ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL FROM ANYWHERE.

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

ParentSquare

ST. JOHN'S COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**FORTIFYFL**  
SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING APP

FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials.

#FORTIFYFL  
GETFORTIFYFL.COM

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

**chipmunk**  
School Bus Tracker

**eSchoolPLUS**  
Family

## Jailbreak 5K: Join our Team on 10/25

[Grab your Halloween costume and head to the Old Jail!](#)

Runners will "escape the Old Jail" and evade capture in this 5K while helping to raise money for St. John's County Schools.



## JAIL BREAK 5K

Presented by Old Town Trolley Tours of St. Augustine

& Investing in Kids (INK!)