



OMES at-a-Glance

News for Otis A. Mason Families

January 2026



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Journey to 5th Grade: Manatee Highlight



Our 5th Grade Team strives to prepare our scholars for the exciting world ahead: Middle School! **Cultivating personal responsibility** is at the heart of 5th grade!

- Habits are everything: what calendar/planning system does your child use? Include your child in scheduling and planning. Do they know when they have soccer practice? Have them add the recital to the calendar! How much time will it take for them to be ready?
- Homework and reading should become more challenging! Help your child choose books and media that challenge their reading level, grow their vocabulary, and raise moral questions that you can discuss as a family.
- Social-emotional learning is crucial at this age. While it is tempting to get involved with arguments or disagreements between friends. Allow your child the independence to learn how to navigate their social circles themselves.
- Establish clear responsibilities and boundaries for your 5th grader. Your child should have regular chores around the house. Be sure to limit use of electronic devices the AAP is clear that media should not replace sleep, exercise, personal interactions, and that they have no place in a child's bedroom, or at the dinner table.

Character Highlight: January is all about the Pillar of RESPECT!

Every month our school highlights and teaches a different pillar of character. The focus for the month of January is RESPECT. Why is respect so important? Respect 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 respectful member of the community**.

- **How can we make teaching manners fun?** Model and teach your child good manners with a Fancy Tea Party Night or by hosting a dinner with friends and family. Use real-life examples as teachable moments.
- **Respect your child by letting them problem solve their issues first.** When appropriate, allow your child to solve their own problems first. Students really appreciate the opportunity!
- **Some things never change: Follow the Golden Rule!** Empathy is so important! Coach your child to imagine how their words and actions affect others.
- **Show respect with your language:** Children will follow your lead so let them hear positive, respectful language especially in times of conflict.
- **Highlight and respect differences in our world.** Show your child the glorious tapestry all different cultures create when we come together as one world! All people share a common humanity and yet we are spectacularly different. Let's celebrate it!
- **How does respect look...?** ...in the car? ...in the home? ...in the hallway? ...in school? ... with family? ... with people we don't know? ...in a restaurant? Always have a discussion with your child about how to show respect, even when it may be challenging.

Have questions about Character Counts? Contact us! We are always available to support you with character education. At Otis A. Mason, YOUR Character Counts!



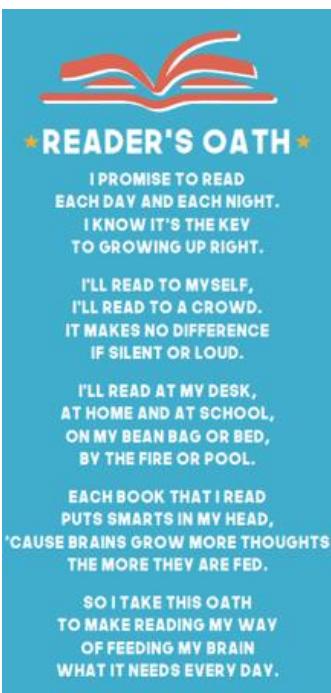
**Your Voice Matters:
Join Us at SAC this week,
January 8th at 3:15pm:
Join the team!**

JOIN OAMES SAC!

Are you ready to make a positive impact at Otis A. Mason Elementary School? Then, you need to join our School Advisory Council! You can help shape the future of our Manatees by sharing your ideas and expertise. Save the date now and come to our JANUARY 2026 meeting!



Celebrate Literacy with READING!



Literacy is a gift! Join us in taking the Reader's Oath and in making reading a part of your family's everyday routine. Studies show that reading for 20 minutes every day with your child improves their skills in just about every educational facet!

Need access to more books? Check out our incredible and FREE St. Johns County Public Library System (sjcpls.org). A library card will give you access to FREE online services too.

Manatees, Come and Run with Us!

CHARACTER COUNTS!
In St. Johns County

12TH ANNUAL 6K 3K RUN • WALK

Saturday, February 1, 2025
9 A.M.

Palencia Elementary School



Register by December 31, 2024, to receive a race t-shirt and other give-aways from sponsoring businesses and community organizations!



PRESENTING SPONSOR

REGISTER AT
RACESHMITH.COM



- Pre-race stretch at 7:30 a.m.
- DJ & post-race festivities
- Race medal & t-shirt
- Artisan market

Register Today!

JANUARY 17 • START TIME 8 a.m.

400 Health Park Blvd. St. Augustine, FL

Proceeds will benefit the:

UF Health St. Johns Mobile Outreach Clinic





READ, WHITE and BLUE

Celebrating 250 Chapters of America

CELEBRATE LITERACY WEEK 2026

Celebrate Literacy Week is designed to raise awareness about the importance of reading and to inspire Florida's students and families to make reading part of their daily routines. Join us for a week of fun and learning as we celebrate Literacy Week!

January 26th
STARS OF LITERACY DAY
DRESS AS A BOOK CHARACTER
CREATE A BOOK COVER FOR YOUR FAVORITE BOOK

MONDAY

January 27th
TIME TRAVEL TUESDAY
DRESS FROM ANY DECADE
CALDECOTT MEDAL WINNERS READ ALOUD

TUESDAY

January 28th
FLASHLIGHT FREEDOM READ & CAMPING DAY
WEAR CAMPING CLOTHES
FLASHLIGHT/LANTERN READING CENTER
CLASSROOM CAMPFIRE STORY CIRCLE

WEDNESDAY

January 29th
FOUNDING READERS DAY
DRESS LIKE AN EXPLORER OR SHOW SCHOOL SPIRIT
READ WITH A BUDDY EXPERIENCE
COOPERATIVE WRITING: TRAVEL ACROSS AMERICA STORY

THURSDAY

January 30th
STARS, STRIPES, & STORIES CELEBRATION
DRESS IN RED, WHITE, AND BLUE
SCHOLASTIC STORY VOICE AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

FRIDAY

Students and teachers will hear daily mystery readers on the announcements, visit the "guess that reader" display during the week, view the 3rd-5th grade student book review videos, and receive a book from our school wide book giveaway event.

Encourage your child to participate and share the joy of reading.

LET'S MAKE LITERACY WEEK UNFORGETTABLE!



Otis A. Mason Celebrates Perfect Attendance Every Quarter

Every quarter at Otis A. Mason Elementary School, we recognize, celebrate, and award all students who have perfect attendance. Every quarter is a new opportunity for your student to earn perfect attendance.

"Research shows that attendance is an important factor in student achievement"

-National Center for Education Statistics

Please join us in making sure your child attends school as much as possible. If a child becomes ill or has an appointment, remember to send in a note to excuse the absence. Every minute of the school day is important to us. A student is always welcome to attend school after an appointment, even if they will only be with us for a couple hours! Some grade levels have significant math, science, reading, and writing instruction in the first and/or last 45 minutes of the day.



Thank you, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Why don't we have school on January 15th? For resources on this important man and holiday, click below:

[History Channel](#)

[Nat Geo Kids](#)

[Britannica](#)

[The King Center](#)

["I have a Dream" Speech](#)



Panera Spirit Day: January 30th

RAISE SOME DOUGH!
Help support us!

25% of sales will benefit
Otis A. Mason Elementary PTO

January 20, 2026
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm
600 Tingle Ct
St Augustine, FL

In Cafe Drive-Thru
Pick-Up Delivery

Enter promo code FUND4U at online checkout.

Panera
FUNDRAISING



Important Dates:

January 5: Classes Resume

January 8: SAC Meeting @ 3:15pm in the Media Center

January 13: Buddy-a-thon PTO Fundraiser

January 9-22: Testing for 3rd-5th Grades

January 15: Report Cards live on HAC

January 15: PTO Meeting at 3:15pm in the Media Center

January 19: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day-NO SCHOOL

January 20: Panera Bread Spirit Night

January 26-30: Celebrate Literacy Week!

