



OMES at-a-Glance

News for Otis A. Mason Families

February 2026



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
Mrs. Lisa Bielefeldt, Assistant Principal

Manatee Highlight: The OMES Team



Our OMES team is just that: a TEAM. We work together to support one another and our students and families.

Safety: Guided by our YRO, Deputy Davis, every member of our staff is trained in school safety. Have any safety concerns? [Report it immediately to Fortify FL](#) or any member of our community.

Health & Nutrition: Our café team provides [FREE, nutritional breakfasts and lunches](#). Additional snacks and drinks are available for purchase too! Our Physical Education department leads with our Kids Heart Challenge initiative and teaches healthy habits and movement.

Educational Resources for Home: Home is a huge part of the educational journey. Regularly access HAC to stay informed of your child's progress through grades, attendance, behavior, etc. In addition, there are FREE online resources available for your child on [Clever](#).

OMES Clinic: Our Registered Nurse, Laurie Jewell supports families through [needed medical support and healthcare issues during the school day](#). In addition, she leads regular First Aid and CPR training of school staff.

Family Engagement: YOU are always invited to participate in your child's education. Join us for [SAC](#), [PTO](#), or one of our many [Title I](#) Engagement nights.

Counseling & Behavior Support: Raising a child can be challenging, and we are here to help. Be sure to utilize the [abundant resources available](#) to your family.

Extended Day services [to support your schedule](#).

Character Highlight: Journey to a Caring World

Here at Otis A. Mason Elementary School, *we are a caring community*. Caring is the very foundation of the world that we wish to be a part of! We believe that every parent, student, teacher, and member of our community should **strive to be CARING**:

- **BE KIND!** Show your child what kindness looks like in all situations (*especially* when you are in situations where you are angry, frustrated, disappointed, and tired). **We can all strive to be kinder and more understanding.**
- **EXPRESS GRATITUDE.** Does your child show gratitude to you? What about siblings? **Are they able to say "thank you" regularly to those who provide services:** waiters, bus drivers, teachers, cashiers, and clerks? How do you demonstrate gratitude to your children?
- **HELP THOSE IN NEED.** It is never too early to get your child involved in charitable giving. Teach them to recognize when someone is struggling and how to help in an age-appropriate way. **Include your child in making donations** to charitable organizations when clothing or toys are outgrown. Everyone is capable of helping someone else.
- **ACTS OF KINDNESS: Consider incorporating random acts of kindness into your household** and neighborhood. Check out the amazing and positive acts of kindness that have gone viral online! Being kind is rewarding.
- **ONLINE CARING-What does it look like?** If social media is a large part of your family life, be sure to demonstrate kind online etiquette to set a good example for your child. Talk through specific examples and coach compassion. Online content and access should always be age appropriate. **Think before you post-how will this make someone else feel?**

Have questions about Character Counts! or character education? Contact our School Counselors at 904-547-8440 or on our website. **We are always available to support you with character education.**



Goodwill Donation Drive on Tuesday, March 24th: Spring Cleaning that Helps our School & Community

How can you help? When you do your spring cleaning, please save and donate items to our Goodwill Bag-it-up Donation Drive! Our school will be participating in a large donation drive this March 24th during the morning drop-off. We will continue collecting items all week March 23rd-March 27th.

When can I bring items in? Our goal is to get as many items as possible dropped off on March 24th during morning drop off. Volunteers from Goodwill will be here to help unload items from your car. We will also accept items the week before and the week after. Please place bags in the blue bins in front of the school.

Why donate my items to Goodwill at Otis A. Mason? We hope this donation drive will be one of many ways to teach your child character here at school. In addition, students who participate will earn a prize from Goodwill. Lastly, our school will receive a monetary reward for participation based on the amount donated:

4-9 carts full will earn our school \$500

10-14 carts will earn us \$1500

15+ carts will earn us \$2500



GOODWILL
INDUSTRIES OF NORTH FLORIDA

LOST ITEMS NEED TO BE FOUND: HELP!

We continue to search for the owners of items in our vast Lost and Found located in the cafeteria. PLEASE have your student check this area regularly-every day. They may stop by before or after school; or during lunch; or with teacher permission during the rest of the school day. Any approved volunteers are also welcome to sign-in at the Front Office and check the Lost and Found for items belonging to their family.

PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING THAT COMES TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD!



OMES Student Government Travels to the St. Johns County Court House



The OMES Student Government took a field trip to the SJC Court House to see government in action. They were lucky enough to meet with judges, attorneys, public defenders, the Clerk of Courts, bailiffs, etc. We appreciate the help of these public servants who made this such a special experience for our students. In addition, we would like to thank our student government sponsor, Mrs. Jaffa, the bus driver, and our parent chaperones for making this fantastic trip happen.



Feb 2-6th: School Counselor Appreciation Week

Feb 6th: SOUPer Bowl Teacher Appreciation Event

Feb 7th: Character Counts! 6K/3K @PES 9:00am

Feb 10th: GRMS Parent Info Night 5-6:15pm.

Feb 12th: SAC Meeting @ 3:15am in the Media Center

Feb 12th: Denim and Diamonds Family Hoedown 5:30-8pm

Feb 17th: Sonic Spirit Night 4-10pm

Feb 19th: PTO Meeting @ 3:30pm in the Media Center

Feb 23rd: Kids Heart Challenge Kick-off

OMES Book Club: Disrupting Thinking:

Why How We Read Matters, Part 1

Our team regularly reads the latest in engagement strategies. We would like to share what we have learned! We hope this summary of research will help assist you as you guide your child in literacy strategies. Authors Kylene Beers and Robert Probst are classroom teachers and researchers in the field of reading engagement, strategies, instruction, and analysis.

Disrupting Thinking Part 1: The Book Head Heart Framework

Research shows that students respond better to a text, even understand it better, if they connect to it in some way. How do you encourage a child to connect with the text?

Experts suggest the BHH Framework. When your child reads, have them think about:

The Book:

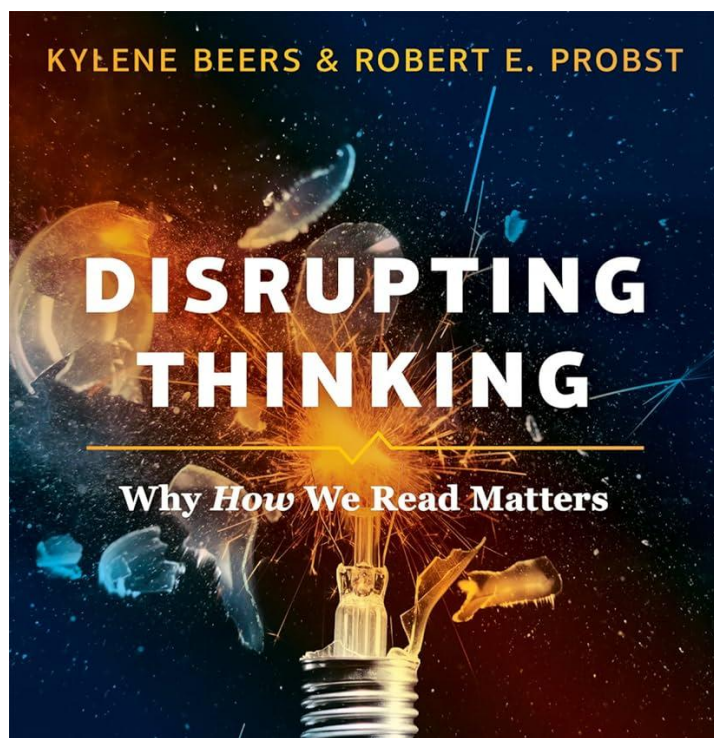
What is it about? Who's narrating? What does the author want me to know? This is just step 1, the "5Ws" of who? What? Where? When? Why?

The Head:

What surprised me? What does the author assume that I know? What changed, challenged, or confirmed my thinking? This analysis should be a more in-depth thinking "outside" the book.

The Heart:

What did the text teach me about myself? How will this help me to be better? How does the story, author, character, plot, make me feel? This critical step adds the connection we need to build.



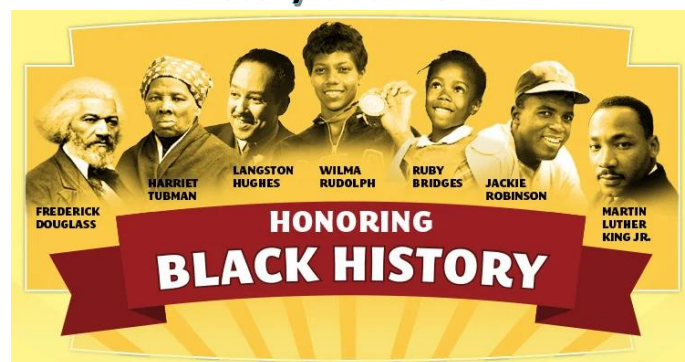
Yearbooks, Spring Photos, and Class Photos: Contact Leonard's

[Contact Leonard's Photography](#) for all of your photo needs. Check out [Buytheyearbook.com](#) to order your yearbook.



February 27th: Class Group Photos and Spring Individual: All classes will be photographed together with their respective teachers. Order forms will be sent home or order on our website the week before picture day! In addition, families will have the option to purchase individual Spring photos.

Celebrating Heroes in American History this Month:



We will be learning about some incredible African Americans this month. We hope your family enjoys these resources:

Nat Geo's Intro to BHM:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/black-history-month>

Smithsonian's Guide to Historical Artifacts:

<https://historyexplorer.si.edu/major-themes/theme/black-history-month>

Interviews with diverse authors about diverse characters:

<https://www.readingrockets.org/books-and-authors/literacy-calendar/celebrating-and-learning-about-black-history-and-culture>

Library of Congress Guide to Celebrate BHM:

<https://www.blackhistorymonth.gov/>

Kids Heart Challenge: Heart Healthy!

Let's Eat Healthy: Click here for a guide to healthy eating!
<https://www.myplate.gov/>

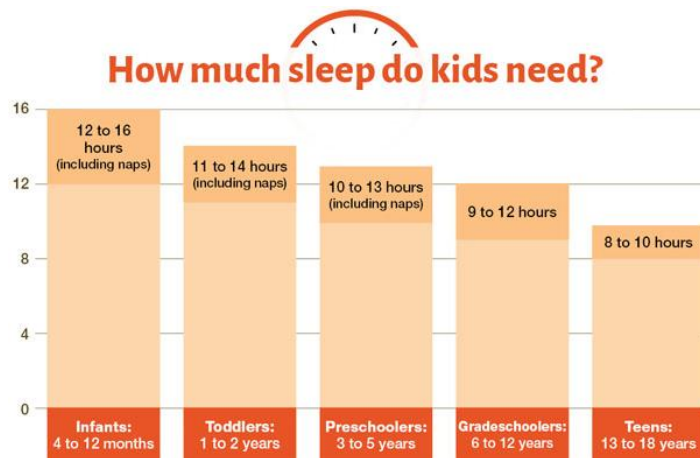


Let's Get Moving! Click here for the American Heart Association's Guide to Exercise. Be sure to follow the American Academy of Pediatrics guide to screen time. Get off those screens and get moving. What exercise is right for me? <http://tinyurl.com/mr3jasum>

Do you know CPR? Click here to learn how to save a life. Guides and certification classes are available.

<https://cpr.heart.org/en/>

What is your family's healthy sleep habit? Make sure your child gets the appropriate amount of uninterrupted sleep. Collect phones at least 30 minutes before bedtime.



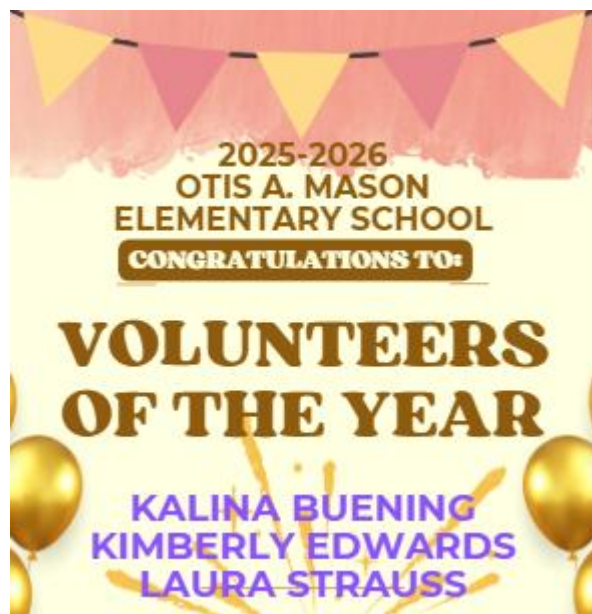
Business Partner Shout-Out! Thank you, Smooth Movers Florida!



Congratulations, Teachers, Employee, and Volunteers of the Year!

We wanted to once again congratulate several incredible Manatees in our community:

Teacher of the Year: Mrs. Tatman
Rookie Teacher of the Year: Ms. Sadler
School Employee of the Year: Ms. Heather
Senior Volunteer of the Year: Mrs. Strauss
Adult Volunteer of the Year: Mrs. Edwards
Junior Volunteer of the Year: Miss Kalina Buening



In addition, we want to thank the multitude of volunteers, chaperones, donors, cooks, creators, and supporters. It truly takes a village, and we are so grateful to have you as a part of ours! Volunteers make the world a better place! Every minute counts! Thank YOU!!!!

Lessons, Challenges, and Hope for Families Affected by Autism:

Insights from a Parent, Author, and Advocate

JEANETTA BRYANT • FOUNDER OF ABILITIES WORKSHOP & AUTHOR OF "AUTISM ADVOCACY INTERRUPTED"

Join Jeanetta Bryant — parent, author, advocate, and founder of Abilities Workshop — for a powerful and heartfelt conversation on the real-world challenges of autism advocacy. Drawing from both professional expertise and lived experience, Jeanetta shares what families truly face behind the scenes and how those realities impact children, caregivers, and support systems. This engaging session will explore how families can move beyond isolation, navigate complex systems with greater confidence, and create stronger, more connected, and more supportive communities where every individual is seen, valued, and empowered.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

TUESDAY
February 3, 2026
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

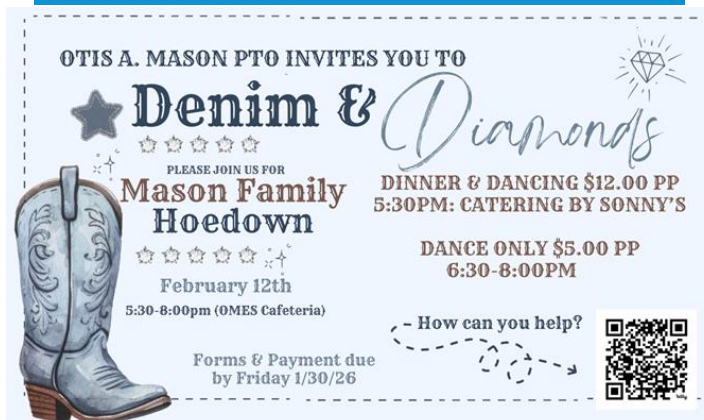
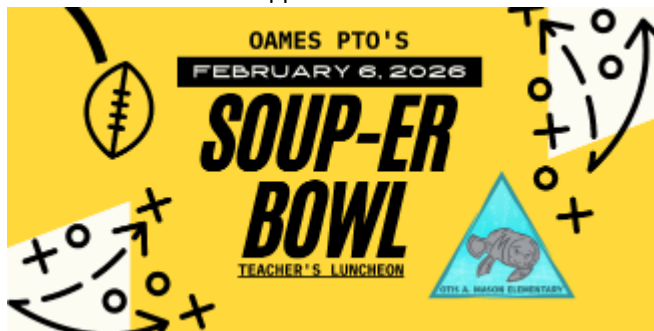
Join on your computer or mobile app via link below
Join the meeting now

Or call (audio only) 904-420-0831
 Phone Conference ID: 700 650 207#

This meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams platform

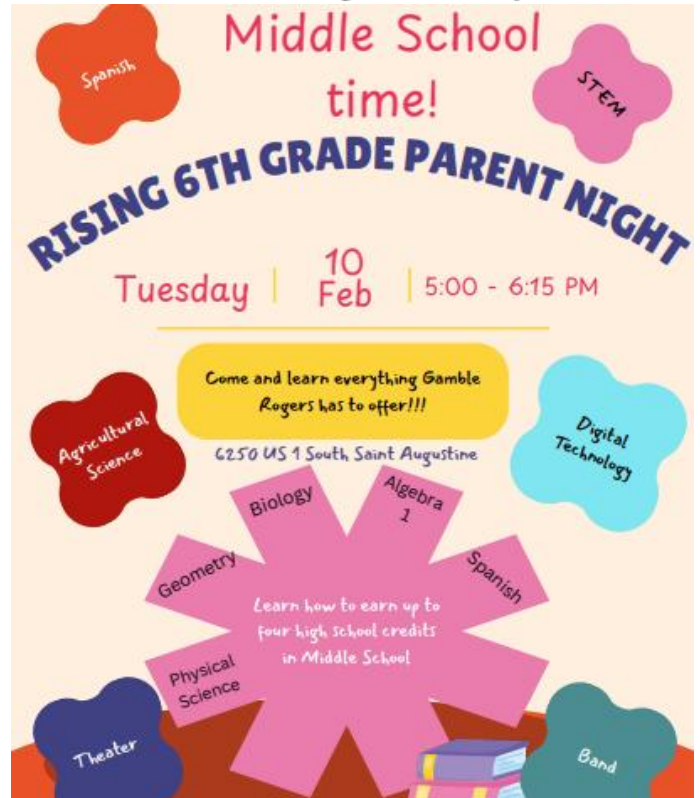
Upcoming PTO Events

Your help is needed to make the SOUP-ER Bowl a success. [Click here to donate or volunteer.](#) It is such a great way to show our love and appreciation for OMES!



Check out our next PTO meeting on Thursday, February 19th after school in the Media Center at 3:30pm.

Will your student be in 6th grade @Gamble Rogers next year?



Available to ALL Current 5th Grade Students: Marine Science Camp

