

Construction Update

Middle/High School

With the passage of the referenda on April 17, 2007, OHMS is able to experience facility enhancements that have assisted in the progression and modernization of the curriculum. Improvements include:

- ◆ Interactive Computer Labs
- ◆ Advanced Graphics Labs
- ◆ Modernized Industrial Technology
- ◆ Updated Consumer Science area
- ◆ Expanded Agricultural Science area
- ◆ Renovated Auditorium



Elementary

Through the extension of the construction bonds on April 17, 2007, Olympia's Elementary Schools are able to experience facility enhancements that are assisting in a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment for our students. Improvements include:

- ◆ Learning Centers with Improved Technology
- ◆ Climate Control Systems
- ◆ Security, Camera, and Entrance Systems
- ◆ Restroom and Cafeteria Remodels and Expansion
- ◆ Structurally Sound and Secure Buildings



Learning Centers Provide Excellent Educational Settings

Olympia libraries are no longer just a quiet place to find books and study, it can also be a place to research and gain access to the latest information available through books, media, and the World Wide Web. We no longer refer to it as just a library, but as a Learning Center. The Learning Center is often the "hub" of the school. The Learning Center model has been evolving in our district at the High School and Middle School level and has now been implemented in the Elementary Schools.

According to the American Library Association, the Learning Center has become necessary in order to teach our students to be information literate. This means "knowing when information is needed and having the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." The Learning Center integrates what is being taught in the classroom with information skills students need to be successful.

All Olympia Learning Centers have a fully automated circulation desk which can be viewed from the Olympia web page at "Find a Book." We hope to help our students develop a love for reading and become life long learners.



Science Class Goes Lego-Robotic

Mrs. Westphalen's 6th grade encore science class joined with FIRST LEGO League, a global robotics program to learn about problem solving, technology and scientific research. FIRST means "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology" and is designed to challenge students in a series of competitions. The LEGO League competition uses LEGO Mindstorms materials.

Sixteen OMS students competed in two teams at the regional LEGO league competition on December 13 in Peoria. They were judged on their ability to complete the missions, teamwork, technical programming skills and their presentation. Caterpillar, Inc sponsored these teams by providing the LEGO Mindstorms materials and paid all registrations fees.

Students built robots and obstacle courses from LEGOs. These robots were programmed to complete missions that involved maneuvering around obstacles, picking up objects and moving things into different areas of the course.

This year's theme, Climate Connections, also required students to do a research project that developed solutions to issues that relate to their community and their climate.

In addition, the Olympia School District is pleased to announce that Amity Westphalen has been chosen to participate in the National Science Teachers Association New Teacher Academy. She was selected as one of 185 teachers nationwide to participate in a year-long professional development program with online classes and seminars. She will be paired with a mentor online and will be able to network across the country. She teaches chemistry and physical science as well as an encore class for 6th grade.

Congratulations to Mrs. Westphalen for her selection to the NSTA New Teacher Academy and to her 6th grade encore class.



The Administration, Board, and Staff would like to thank the Olympia community for supporting the facility enhancements. Your support enables Olympia to continue the tradition of Educational Excellence!

Olympia Joins Illinois Association of School Boards in Celebrating School Board Members

November 15, 2008 was designated as School Board Members Day in Illinois and Olympia CUSD 16 recognized its Board members during the November 10th regular Board meeting, thanking them for their commitment and contribution to the Olympia School District.

School Board Members serve countless volunteer hours working to make education the best it can be for the students of Olympia. They help provide vision and leadership for student achievement, academic programs, district funding, and school facilities. Their service ensures that decisions are being made by those most familiar with the needs of our communities' children and families.

Pictured back row: Trena Glenn, Carolyn Hansen, Curt Morr, Kevin Frazier
 Front row: Sondra Hayes, Laura Cremeens, Steve Matter



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A new face seen this year while at Olympia Middle school or High School is Resource Officer, Jayson Kessinger, of the McLean County Sheriff's Department. Originally from McLean County, Deputy Kessinger spent time in California before relocating in Central Illinois to pursue his career in law enforcement. Deputy Kessinger has been with the Department for five years, three of those years were spent in Corrections and two years in Patrol.

Deputy Kessinger is looking forward to a successful year with students, staff and community members. If you have questions, he can be contacted at 309-379-6011 ext. 9187 or via email at jayson.kessinger@olympia.org.

