



FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER



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Dates to Remember

- The next Olympia Board of Education Meeting will be held on March 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Olympia Board Room.
- Third quarter grading period ends on March 14, 2008.
- OMS Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held from 4:00pm to 8:00pm on March 17 and 18.
- There is NO SCHOOL on Friday, March 21 due to Parent-Teacher Conferences.
- Spring Break (No School) will be from March 24-28

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PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

As we pass the halfway mark of this third quarter grading period, take time to praise your middle school student on his/her successes this year, as well as encouragement and support in the areas upon which improvement is needed. This is the time of winter that can be most stressful for middle school students, and we want to ensure that all students of OMS are achieving at their highest potential.

I would also like to thank everyone for their understanding and cooperation this winter. We have had four snow days. As many of you know, our open rural roads can become hazardous quickly, and power loss happens frequently in rural communities. Hopefully, no more snow days will be used, and we can commit to an 8th grade Promotion Ceremony Date soon.

Coming up in the next couple of weeks, OMS students will take the state-mandated ISAT (Illinois Standards Achievement Tests). During this week of important tests, please make sure your middle school student gets plenty of rest and a good breakfast each day.

The OMS Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) will be meeting

on **Tuesday, February 26th at 6:30pm** to discuss any needed changes to the OMS Student Handbook for the next (2008-09) school year. If you think of anything else in particular from this year's handbook that you feel needs changed, please do not hesitate to let me know about it.

AIMS, the Association of Illinois Middle-level Schools, recently visited OMS to consider for the National "Horizon: Schools to Watch" Award, in company with four other middle schools in the suburban part of the state. The members on the site visit team were very impressed with the many great things happening at Olympia Middle School, and we should know within two to four weeks whether we receive this prestigious award.

As you can see, there are a lot of good things happening at OMS on a daily basis, and it is my pleasure to be able to share these with you. Thank you for all you do to make our school the success that it is!

Respectfully yours,

Todd Dugan
Principal

“SPARTAN PRIDE” AWARDS AT OMS

In an effort to reward students for choosing appropriate behaviors and displaying overall characteristics of good citizens, Olympia Middle School has instituted a “Spartan Pride” award. This weekly honor is awarded to a student who has been nominated by his/her team of teachers for displaying the following character traits: *Respect, Generosity, Organization, Responsibility, Compassion, Enthusiasm* and *Honesty*. The honored student then receives a certificate, an Olympia T-shirt, a coupon for a free “slushy” from the OMS cafeteria, and a chance to win the quarterly drawing prize. The winners of this coveted award so far in this third quarter are: **Jared Nicholas, Clint Breedwell, Chase Allen, Fraley Downey, Justin Aldred, and Tyler Deal**. Each student that wins this award during the third nine weeks will be entered into a drawing for a prize donated by an area business to be held at the next OMS Honors Assembly in April.

WASHINGTON DC TRIP

On May 24-27, 2008, 8th grade OMS students will have the opportunity to participate in a tour of Washington, D.C. An extra stop in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania is also on the agenda. The tour is sponsored by Educational Tours, Inc. and will be moderated by former Olympia teacher Mr. Doug Davis of McLean. Students who were interested in attending this tour were encouraged to write an essay about their desire to attend in order to receive a scholarship that would pay for the trip. After reading several scholarship essays, I am pleased to announce that **Jessica Elbert** and **Carissa Matter** are the recipients of this year’s OMS Washington, DC Scholarship Award! Congratulations!

STUDENT ACCESS

Enclosed with this newsletter and grade card are usernames and passwords for students. Students have been instructed during HomeBase about the importance of safeguarding the confidentiality of their log-in information. In an effort to empower students with additional ownership of their learning, students in grades 6-12 have been generated their own login usernames and passwords. Students should receive their information with this newsletter. If it is not included, please contact the OMS office at 309-379-5941.

ISAT TESTING

As many of you are aware, the state-mandated Illinois State Achievement Tests are rapidly approaching. At Olympia Middle School, students will be taking these tests during the week of **March 3-7, 2008**. During this week of important tests, please make sure that your child 1) gets plenty of sleep each night and 2) eats a good breakfast each morning. Of course, attendance is very important during this week as well.

Makeup tests will begin the following week. Traditionally, OMS students have performed very well on these tests across the district. However, please encourage your child to do his/her best on these tests, because the information obtained from them are a reflection of their academic progress.

OMS TEACHER RECEIVES RECOGNITION

OMS 6th Grade Language Arts/Reading teacher **Ms. Crystal Thompson** was recently recognized by the Corn Belt division of the Illinois Principals Association at a Faculty Recognition Luncheon. Ms. Thompson was nominated for this award based on 1) Service to the community 2) Self-Improvement 3) Contribution to the school and 4) Dedication to the school, staff and/or students. Ms. Thompson received a certificate of appreciation as well as a complimentary lunch at Biaggi’s in Bloomington. We are extremely proud of Ms. Thompson!

COMMUNICATION

Mr. Mike Neisler of the OMS PE Department would like to ask any Olympia parents or community members if they have an old “ping pong” table they would like to donate to the Middle School. In order to provide middle school students with the most comprehensive and well-round Physical Education curriculum, he would like OMS students to complete a table tennis unit. OMS currently owns some, but if anyone is planning on getting rid of one anytime soon, he will gladly come and take it off your hands.