

Message from the Principal

Students and Staff at OMMS are starting to prepare for our state testing. CMAS stands for: Colorado Measures of Academic Success while PARCC stands for: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. These exams are designed to help teachers, schools, students, and parents determine whether students are on track in their learning for success after high school, and to assess mastery of updated Colorado Academic Success. All public schools in the state of Colorado are required to administer PARCC tests for Literacy and Math and the CMAS test for Science and Social Studies.

This is not a test that is passed with rote memorization and last minute drills. It calls for critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to synthesize information from various sources and provide evidence and reasoning when making an argument or solving a math equation. Rather than just asking students to select the correct answer and fill in the bubble of a multiple-choice test, it pushes students to apply their knowledge, thus better preparing them for higher education and a career.

With that being said, we encourage all students to participate in these assessments and perform to their fullest potential so we may gather useful data and place students in appropriate courses and better meet their individual needs. These tests also allow students, parents, and staff to have an accurate picture of each students' growth over time.

This year, we expect all students to attend school during the testing period. Students whose parents submit refusal forms will be asked to take some regular, school-based tests so we are better able to evaluate every student's academic strengths and weaknesses and use this information to provide the best educational opportunities.

If you are considering the possibility of excusing your student from taking this state assessment, refusal forms can be found on the district website and must be submitted to our office prior to the first day of testing. Before you decide to opt your child out of these tests, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this important decision with you. Please feel free to call my office at any time.

Finally, we continue to appreciate all you do to support your son/daughter and the staff at OMMS. **Once again we need all students present during testing days** and ask that no appointments be scheduled during those days as well. We will not be able to interrupt classes during a testing session unless it is an emergency. To assist you in arranging for appointments, the testing schedule has been included. If you should have questions concerning the upcoming assessment, please do not hesitate to contact me at 254-6333. Cheri Vana, Principal

We are currently in need of parents to become part of our PTO!!! I understand that many parents are extremely busy and are doing their best to provide their students with all the needs that occur on a daily basis. Adding one more thing to your routine may not be doable right now, however I wanted to let you know exactly what this commitment entails. The Orchard Mesa PTO meets approximately 5 times per year. The meetings are held to one hour and are very informal. Our current members are all parents of 8th graders and will be supporting their students at their individual high schools next year. With this loss in leadership we are unfortunately looking at the possibility of discontinuing our 5K fundraiser that we host each year, as well as all other projects that our PTO supports. Our final PTO meeting will be held on Monday, May 5th at 6:00 PM in the Library. We would appreciate any parents of 6th and 7th graders to step forward and join us for our final meeting.

Thanks for your consideration,

Cheri Vana (Principal)

Antibiotics are great medicines but they do not cure everything and should be used with some caution. They do not cure the common cold, influenza (the flu), most cases of acute bronchitis, sore throats not caused by strep, runny noses, or most ear infections. These illnesses tend to go away by themselves. If you are prescribed an antibiotic, follow your doctors and the pharmacist's instructions carefully:

Never take an antibiotic just in case. Taking an antibiotic when you don't need one could cause it not to work when you do need it.

Antibiotics can cause nausea, diarrhea, stomach pain, and, in rare cases, allergic reaction.

Unless instructed to do otherwise by your doctor, always complete your cycle of antibiotics even if you start feeling better before you finish your prescription.

Never use someone else's antibiotics. They may not be right for the illness you have.

Always ask your doctor whether antibiotics is the best treatment for what ails you.

Do not pressure your doctor to give you antibiotics. Instead, ask your physician what other treatment(s) may help you feel better.

Avoid illness by keeping your hands clean, using soap, and clean running water.

Keep your immunizations up-to-date and get an annual flu shot.

Sally Converse, OMMS Health Assistant

Student Instructional Fee needs to be paid before purchasing a yearbook.

March 4: Drama Club Performances
March 6: School of Choice Window opens at 10:00 a.m.
March 8: Student meeting for Track season during lunches
March 9: End of Quarter
March 10: Teacher Workday/No school for students
March 14: Parent meeting for Track season 5:30 p.m. Band room
March 14: Middle School Jazz Jam at Palisade H.S.
March 15: District Wrestling Tournament at Central H.S.
March 20—24 Spring Break
March 27: Track practice begins
March 28-29: 8th grade testing
March 30: 7th grade testing
March 31: School of Choice window closes at 4:00 p.m.
April 4: 7th grade testing
April 5-6: 6th grade testing

Our Drama Club will be performing on Saturday, March 4th.

There are two performances (same scenes, different actors because I had so many sign up!), one at 5:30pm and one at 6:00pm. It would mean so much to the kids to have an audience of more than just their parents who "have" to be there. It's going to be a lot of fun! The kids and I are having a blast so far. There will be costumes, and even dancing, and it's in the historic Margery Building's lovely ballroom with wood floors, tall ceilings, and pretty lights! Even if you don't like Jane Austen or the story of *Pride and Prejudice*, you'll still have a good time. Come out and support us if you possibly can! See me if you have any questions. Thanks!

Mrs. Nicholson

8th Grade Alpine Student of the Month

March 2017

Isabelle Martinez & Camden Gilliam

These students were recognized by their teachers for their excellence in academics and their demonstration of OMMS' core values of safety, ethics, and respect. Each student will be honored at a luncheon with a plaque and a \$500 scholarship, renewable yearly, to Colorado Mesa University or Western Community College.

February Student of the Month Recipients

Noah Roberson, Angelo Rodriguez,
Iris ValdezOsorio, Melanie Stogner,
Aspen Waltz, Zachary Matthews,
Kathryn Dunaway, Kyle Kelley, Amelia Moore,
Jeremiah Hargis & J.D. Johnson

News from Seventh Grade

In social studies: THIS IS SPARTA! Students will be learning about Greece: Athens and Sparta!

In ELA: Students will continue to experience discomfort by pushing their thinking! We will continue to read our novel, *Okay for Now*. Students will start their fourth and final quarter of 7th grade ELA. In fourth quarter we participate in student-designed service projects, connecting with students in another country, participating in Socratic Seminar, and a large final Demonstration Project. These 7th graders will not only show their understanding of 7th grade ELA concepts, but also show their growth as a young person. Keep a look-out for invitations to watch your student present his or her growth!

ELA - How Parents Can Support Reading at Home

There are times at conferences when parents will comment that their student is reluctant to read at home, or will not bring their reading novels home at all.

The ELA teachers at Orchard Mesa Middle School have some great advice to share! We really encourage all parents to check in with their student daily – especially when it comes to reading. All ELA teachers require students to read at home. Students are given the choice to pick a free read book at the library to help encourage them to build vocabulary, comprehension, and reading stamina. They are required to take the book home nightly and spend 30 minutes per evening reading.

We suggest having students read to their parents or other siblings, writing down what they have read (summarizing), and sharing out some of the exciting parts of their book in order to retain information.

Lastly, the website [Scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com) has some wonderful tips and resources to help parents support their students reading at home. Here is there website to get some ideas -

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/more-reading-resources/reading-tips-parents>

We hope that just some simple daily choices will help students be encouraged to read at home and gain some necessary reading skills. Happy reading!

Regular math is finishing up linear functions and inequalities and then will be moving to surface area, volume, and angles.

Honors is working through surface area, volume, and angles and then will be moving to data analysis

Science is moving into cellular respiration and photosynthesis. Students are learning deeply about life's building blocks!