

THE KNIGHTLY NEWS

Principal: Dr. Danny Medved

Assistant Principals:
Jason Eiding, Lisa Holst

Dear Orchard Mesa Families,

I hope you all are doing well and that you can take a few minutes to read through this very full newsletter. As we enter spring and close out our third quarter, we have so much to celebrate at Orchard Mesa Middle School (OMMS)! Spring is an exciting time of year to be in a school community. Spring is when we bring our efforts to completion. Spring is also when we have a chance to see how new academic and social and emotional growth can create new opportunities for our students and the school as a whole. Finally, spring is a time where we let go of where we have been and look to where we are going for the new academic year. This is most evident with our 8th grade students, as they prepare to make the transition to high school. Please read below to hear more about some of our recent OMMS wins and the exciting places where we are planning to go.

Wins

There is much to celebrate here at OMMS. First, I want to share about how members of our Social Studies team have been working on designing instruction to fit the National History Day (NHD). Students have been researching the topic of "Turning Points in History," such as the invention of CPR, the telescope, or refrigeration. Just last week eighth grade OMMS Challenge students hosted an open house and presented their NHD projects to parents, community members, and even members of our D51 Board of Education and our Superintendent, Dr. Hill. Some of our sixth grade students are also following suit and are researching important "turning points" in history.

Another exciting win was our high school information event where members of the counseling teams from Grand Junction High School (GJHS), Central High School, and Palisade High School came out to meet with our 8th graders to talk about the high school transition. Students had a chance to learn about and begin selecting course offerings. For example, students headed to GJHS had an opportunity to learn about the four Academies: 1. Business, Communication, and Entrepreneurship, 2. Environmental Science, Technology, and Engineering, 3. Health Sciences and Human Services, and 4. Arts and Humanities. Students were excited and inspired as they started to catch a vision for their futures.

I want to end with three other wins that come in the areas of extra-curricular engagement. First, we are proud to say that our OMMS MESA Stem club won the top three spots in the advanced division of the district MESA STEM competition this week. Huge shout out to coach Angie and coach Kent for supporting our students in the MESA club! Along these same lines, Mr. P and Mr. Grandbouche have started a Chess Club that meets on Tuesdays and is exploding with intellectual interest! Finally, I want to recognize our partner, Riverside Education Center (REC) who runs the afterschool program at OMMS. This program grows each month and we now have almost 50 students attending daily with over 100 OMMS students enrolled. Students at OMMS are engaged during school and beyond!

Looking Ahead

All of these great accomplishments are made possible by our amazing staff who are “all in” for our students. Our staff also desires to continue to improve in our ability to serve each of our students. Along these lines, we are excited to begin dreaming about and planning for where we can go in the years ahead. As a way to support the success of each of our students, a big decision that our staff voted on was to be more intentional with how we schedule students. For example, inspired by the proven design of the Challenge Program and in an effort to increase the amount of rigorous course offerings that OMMS provides, our school plans to develop Honors Courses that OMMS students and families can opt into. We want to foster a culture that encourages students to take academic risks that challenge them and prepare them for high school and beyond. Likewise, we want to be intentional with providing students with targeted support that they may need in areas such as literacy, math, and leadership development skills. Expect to hear more about and engage in our scheduling process in the months ahead. Please also talk about your student’s academic engagement and if being challenged by Honors courses in ELA, Social Studies, or Math could be a good next step. We will provide more specific information about our scheduling process in the weeks ahead.

Related to the idea of intentional scheduling, we are entering an important time in the school year where students “show what they know” by taking assessments. Most of the year is over and we want to know what knowledge and skills students have mastered and where we need to continue to focus. Currently, students are taking the Spring District Interim Assessments. Our initial results look great and I am proud of the full effort that our students are showing. We define effort using our Knight’s Assessment Rubric which is linked [HERE](#). Take some time to review this rubric and ask your student about the amount of time, level of focus, and amount of writing he or she has put into our Interims. So much of being successful in life is about attitude and effort. We want our students to practice those skills on assessments and in class. We will use this same rubric on CMAS in the first part of April. Please support your school by encouraging your child to give full effort on all of our school, district, and state assessments. This assessment data provides teachers with accurate information that can inform teaching and it guides course placement both here and in high school. One final note on assessment is that we want to encourage families to have our students take CMAS. This provides an accurate view on how our students and school are doing compared to the rest of the state. Students who opt out will be provided alternative course work to complete. This is a chance to put our best foot forward and showcase the great learning that is taking place at OMMS.

In support of an effective CMAS administration and in an effort to be better stewards of our technology resources on March 11th we will be shifting how we manage Chromebooks. More specifically, we will be moving from a 1-1 Chromebook take home and check out model to a Chromebook classroom set model. This means students will no longer take Chromebooks home with them. Rather, they will access them in each class that they attend. For students who do need to take a Chromebook home, we will have a protocol for checking these out. We will try this process through the remainder of this school year and will assess how it goes to inform how we move forward with Chromebook management next year. Thank you for supporting us in this change. Please ensure that your student brings the Chromebook and charger to school next week, so we can get an accurate inventory.

I want to end by sharing how our student government group continues to amaze me. They are planning to end the year well by hosting a community night in late April. This will be a celebration for the year and a chance to send out our eighth graders and welcome our incoming fifth graders. Stay tuned for more information on this fun school and community engagement event.

Thanks for staying caught up on what is happening at OMMS. Please see below for a list of other important events and information to be aware of as we enter the home stretch of the school year. As always, you can reach out with questions. Thank you for partnering with us in your child’s education.

Go Knights!

STUDENT FEES

There is a \$42.00 instructional fee for every student. The instructional fee covers a portion of the cost of materials that are expendable and consumable and/or items students will retain after the class, such as art supplies, computer and technology supplies, planners, and science lab supplies. Fees can be paid at the Main Office or online at MyPaymentsPlus.com.

Other Student Fees

\$100 instrument fee (Band/Orchestra Students)

\$70 Athletic Participation (If your student is playing a sport 7th and 8th grade only)

\$25 Yearbook (Optional)

Please reach out to Lindsey Wyser - Lindsey.Wyser@d51schools.org with any questions or concerns regarding student fees.



Enroll in City Market Community Rewards and earn money for OMMS every time you shop. It's easy and free to enroll! When you link your Shopper's Card, every purchase you make provides funds for our school. Plus, you'll earn fuel points at the same time.

How to set up Community Rewards:

1. Create a digital account
2. Link you card to OMMS - Sign into your account - Menu - Savings - Community Rewards - Search for OMMS



Attendance Reminder

All student absences must be called in by 9:00 am.
If you aren't able to speak to a secretary then please leave a detailed message.
Please include the student's first and last name and specific reason that your child is absent.

Please notify the office within 48 hours of the absence.
Attendance Office number: 970-254-6320 ext: 38100

Thank you.



Parents need help with Schoology? Click below for help!



https://omms.d51schools.org/schoology_resources

GVT Bus Passes

Our partners at Grand Valley Transit will again offer free GVT bus passes for D51 middle (**need to verify middle school**) and high school students this year. In order for your child to receive a free bus pass, you must first fill out the form online (in [English](#) or [Spanish](#))

Everything you write on the form is completely secure and confidential. The form will be used to determine TANF eligibility, which will help GVT recoup funding and keep the program going. You or your child can pick up the bus pass (which is a sticker for their student ID) from your child's school, any Mesa County public library, GVT Downtown or West Transfer Facility.