

F A L L 2 0 1 3

# Graves Middle School

School Newsletter



## Principal's Corner

I want to take the time to welcome you to a new school year at GMS. With the early start this year we are well into the 2013-2014 school year. One of the biggest changes we have made for this school year is to transition from the quarter grading system to the trimester grading system.

We did this for several reasons, but two of the main reasons are that students have more time (three more weeks) to complete their work and now all students in the South Whittier School District are on the same calendar. The trimester goes slower, so kids have more time to get caught up if they get behind. And with all South Whittier schools on the trimester system report cards will come out at the same time and parent conferences will be the same week. We think the trimester system is better for kids and families. As I have said before, "Come see the difference at Graves Middle School!"

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Policy

The staff of Graves Middle School seeks to make every 8<sup>th</sup> grade student successful as they transition to high school next year. We know that if a student is not successful during his middle school years, there is a very strong chance that he will not be ready for high school and beyond. We have decided that we want to coordinate our resources and efforts to do whatever it takes to give every student the opportunity to achieve success at GMS. Accordingly, we have decided to have one of our teachers, Mr. Dan Honeycutt (AVID/History), serve as our Intervention Coordinator so he can orchestrate resources in order to assist our students who are at-risk of not meeting our rigorous 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Policy, which will help our kids.

### Save the Date!

Parent/Teacher  
Conferences  
**December 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>**

Please make an appointment with your child's teachers. Minimum day schedule, students released at 1:20 pm

Trimester 1 Ends  
**11/6/13**

Our first trimester ends Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, so please be on the lookout for advisory cards on 11/8/13 and report cards shortly afterward.

School Site Council  
**11/13/13**

Join us for the SSC meeting in the Parent Center from 2:50-3:50 pm.

## GMS Expands Its Technology for '13-'14

GMS currently has a new computer lab, 40 Apple iPads, and we are also adding two new computer labs, one in the library and one in a classroom. We are also offering a technology class to our 7<sup>th</sup> graders so they can use technology effectively to learn the course content in all of their classes. In addition, our kids are learning Prezi, PowerPoint, typing, word processing, email, and internet research to prepare for college and careers. They will also be writing their essays on the computer and they will eventually take their standardized tests on the computer too.

We feel that the use of this technology will help students not only learn to use educational technology more effectively, but it will also allow students to be prepared for the upcoming Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which will replace the California State Standards. We also want to prepare them for the upcoming new state assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which will replace the California Standards Test (CST). We are facing a lot of exciting change in education and we know this will make a difference for our kids as they progress through their time at GMS and then head to high school and college or a career. Our kids will be ready for anything!



### Promotion Policy continued

Here are the requirements our students have to meet as part of GMS' 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Policy:

- 1) 2.0 cumulative GPA for each trimester
- 2) No "D's" or "F's" for each trimester
- 3) No more than 10% absences for the year
- 4) No serious or persistent disciplinary problems (including low citizenship marks)

We want to make sure that we are communicating our expectations to you early in the school year and let you know that we will communicate with you frequently about your child's progress. We also want you to know that our Aeries Parent Portal system allows you to see your child's grades, attendance, and assignments from any web-enabled device at any time, in real time. In addition, every three weeks we have academic advisory, so your child will be bringing home her advisory card with her current GPA and possibly a remediation plan if she is at-risk of not meeting our rigorous requirements. As you can see, we have made a big commitment to your child's academic success at GMS. We look forward to working with you and your child to give him every opportunity to succeed this year.





## Panthers Come out Fighting

Our fall sports program is beginning and our football and volleyball teams are gearing up for a competitive season. Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade football teams have battled hard so far and had some close games. Our 8<sup>th</sup> grade football team experienced a very close loss to Granada and had a solid victory against Edwards. They showed dominance during the first half against Edwards, as they went up by two touchdowns, which contributed to a solid victory. Our 7<sup>th</sup> grade football team lost a tough one to Granada and held Edwards off to clinch the victory. Our coaches have been pleased with our kids' effort and look forward to their progress the rest of the season. Go Graves!

Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade volleyball teams have also had some exciting games this season. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders won an exciting and close match against Granada. But they lost a very close game to a skillful Edwards team in the third game of the match. Our 7<sup>th</sup> grade team lost a tough match to Granada to begin the season. Edwards did not have a 7<sup>th</sup> grade team, so our kids had a bye. We are off to a good start and we are excited about the season ahead of us, so please come out and support our kids, our sports teams, and our school. You will notice that our kids exhibit good sportsmanship, give great effort, and work very hard. We look forward to a great season, way to go Panthers!

