

## Computers and Technology Course



### Hello!

I'm Diane Look, the Computers and Technology teacher at McGinnis Middle School. There's a lot going on in the computer lab at school – the purpose of this newsletter is to keep you up-to-date on what's happening. Several talented 8<sup>th</sup> grade students placed my words in this fancy newsletter for your reading enjoyment. This newsletter is also posted on the school website at:

[www.bvschools.org/mms](http://www.bvschools.org/mms).

If you have any questions after reading this, please feel free to call me or email me at school (395-7070; [dianelg@buena-vista.k12.co.us](mailto:dianelg@buena-vista.k12.co.us)).



Jon Allen working on his MSM

## Moodle, Anyone?

“I just sent you a moodle! “ “Have you moodled her lately? “ “Check Moodle for the assignments you missed last week.” These are just a few of the comments heard recently around the McGinnis halls. What is Moodle? It's an online course management system recently adopted by my classes. It enables the students and I to view course assignments, turn in work, and communicate with each other using a secure, online environment.

### **WHAT WE DO WITH MOODLE:**

- \* View information about computer and technology classes on the internet.
- \* Post weekly assignments, making them readily available for viewing at home (because it's internet based) and at school.
- \* Upload completed assignments.
- \* Grade completed assignments, providing private, online feedback to individual students.
- \* Communicate with each other using secure chat rooms, messaging, and blogging.

## What's in a Name?

As most of you know, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in our school have traditionally been required to prepare and present an “exit interview” before moving onto high school. This long-term project, where students prepare a computer-based resume of their qualifications for entering high school, has been a requirement for 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation for 7 years.

This year, we've changed things around a bit – starting with the name. Eighth graders held a contest to rename this rite of passage. “Exit Interviews” no longer seemed to fit – the students aren't interviewed – instead, they prepare an online resume. Josh Weller came up with the winning entry, earning a free yearbook and a lot of chocolate (which, by the way, he didn't share with me). His winning entry is: Middle School Memories, or MSMs, as they are now known.

This year, students will participate in an MSM night, rather than making individual presentations as they have in previous years. The middle school gym will be arranged like a trade show, with tables set up throughout the room. Two eighth graders will stand at each table, with school laptops in front of them. These laptops will display the students' MSM projects.

Families, friends, guests and dignitaries will stroll through the room, asking students specific questions about their years at McGinnis Middle School. Students will access their MSMs on the laptops to show visitors their qualifications for high school. Certain visitors that night will be evaluating students, using prepared questions. Students will use the evening to “sell” themselves, explaining why they are ready for high school.

Students have been working hard on these presentations since January, and they're doing a spectacular job. So, please mark your calendars! This event will take place on Tuesday night, April 29<sup>th</sup>. More information will come as the date approaches.