



# Comets Team Newsletter



Southern's Shooting Stars

## Mrs. Skeie—Guidance

The 2nd marking period is already upon us as we enter into the holiday season. With the 1st marking period already under our belts, the novelty of returning to school after the summer has, by this time, worn off.

I urge students to proceed with caution into this quarter, and here's why: Historically, the 2nd quarter is where students do their worst academically. This can be attributed to many reasons. First, as I have stated earlier, the enthusiasm for returning to school has possibly subsided. Second, as students begin to "settle in" and begin to feel more comfortable with their environment, students can become more complacent about their academic responsibilities, perhaps concentrating more on

their "social agendas." Third, in the 1st quarter, teachers tend to be more lenient in regard to assignments, tests and quizzes, and overall grading, often giving every benefit of the doubt. During the 2nd quarter, this is usually not the case. Finally, the second quarter is filled with inconsistency and distraction due to the holidays. After a week off for teachers convention, the new quarter finally began but is then followed by Thanksgiving Break, which will then be followed by two weeks off for Christmas, and Boom!, the quarter is suddenly nearing its end. Should any student *fall behind* and try to catch up on missing assignments, tests/quizzes, or projects, this is certainly the most challenging marking period to do it.

My message for 2nd Quarter: Stay Focused!! Take it one day at a

## Mrs. Whiteman—Health & PE

The Comets started the new school year off with a bang. The enthusiasm to get back into the gym and begin our activities was contagious.

While the other classes were outside, the Comets as well as the other 8<sup>th</sup> grade PE classes were introduced to Shuffleboard. We played a modified game during class time and ended the unit with an after-school tournament.

Interspersed throughout the week were our specific fitness activities; namely, the Circuit and the Mile Run. Our circuit is specifically designed as an interval training session during the cardio portion and as a resistance, flexibility and agility session during the specific task portion. Our students have come to recognize this activity as an important aspect to their overall fitness, whether they are looking to maintain for their sport or just looking to increase their fitness level as a personal challenge.

Another game the students were introduced to was "Stadium Ultimate Frisbee" and they loved it! Each day, the competition grew and the anticipation to play their respective teams almost reached a fever pitch. All the students became UF players, and the entire gym echoed with the call "SCORE!!"

We ended the first marking period on a very high note. School wide, all of our PE students brought in canned goods to use as their weights in a resistance training class and at the end of that class, the canned goods were all donated to our Builder's Club to provide food to those families in our community that are struggling during these tough economic times. A great way to end an awesome 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

## Mr. Hart—Social Studies

In the first marking period, the Comets covered several topics in their social studies classes. The quarter began with the team learning about character education and the importance of respect in everyday life. From there, we moved on to the Holocaust and examined the causes of the event and what could be done to prevent a similar event from happening again in the future. Many kids were touched by the things they learned and I hope the unit continues to have an impact on their lives. The final item that the students worked on was a project that was based on the Washington D.C. trip. The students did a fantastic job on the assignment and showed some creative thinking in the process.

For the next quarter, the Comets are going to move into American History. We are going to start off by briefly exploring the colonization of the continent and the subsequent formation of our country. The team will look at the movement to break free from Great Britain and the reasons for wanting to do so. Finally, we will study the war which resulted in our country's independence and our attempts to form our own government. I have really enjoyed teaching the Comets this year

## Mrs. Giovine—In-class Support

Welcome back to school! I hope it has been easy to adjust to our team and you are enjoying yourselves so far! This year the Comet teachers are working very hard to make this year fun so stay on track so you can participate in the upcoming activities.

## Mrs. Reynolds—English

The students were very busy during the first marking period. We read *Night* which is a true story about Elie Weisel's experiences during the Holocaust and in many concentration camps. We also spent time working on our writing skills. We will move on to *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* for the second marking period.

Also, for the second marking period, students have begun their second quarter independent reading assignment. Students are required to read novels independently from now until the end of the third marking period. In addition to their reading requirements, they are required to answer questions on their class blog. For more information, visit my website at: [www.srsd.net/teachers/reynoldsm](http://www.srsd.net/teachers/reynoldsm). This is a major part of their second marking period and third marking period marking period grades, so please be sure to ask them occasionally if they are keeping up with their reading and writing.

In addition to the independent reading project, students will complete another project in English class, the "Express Yourself in Three Words" project. Students will create a three word message and digitally show the message, either by writing it on their hands or some other creative way. All of the messages will be put together to create a montage of messages.



# Southern's Shooting Stars



## Mrs. Kuchinsky—Math

The Comets have spent the first marking period of Math 8 expanding their mathematical knowledge. We began by reviewing the Order of Operations and sharpened our skills with integer operations. We also worked with the distributive property and simplifying expressions, which prepared us for equation solving.

Up next, we will begin working with Ratios, Proportions and Percentages. The students will connect the work we're doing with percentages in the classroom with the outside world in areas such as retail and interest rates.

We have also begun preparing for the NJ ASK 8, answering multiple choice and open ended questions. The preparation continues with the students working on Study Island, reinforcing concepts that we have covered in class. The students will have two more Study Island assignments this marking period.

We continue to incorporate the interactive whiteboard into our lessons. This allows us to visualize the concepts we are learning, in order to help us to see Math in a different light!

I look forward to an excellent school year together!

## CONGRATULATIONS!



### September's Students of the Month

- Mr. Astin- HUNTER PUGH
- Mrs. Giovine- LACEY MCNICHOLAS
- Mr. Hart- JACLYN SALERNO
- Mrs. Kuchinsky- MARIAH MARINO
- Mrs. Reynolds- CRISTY PETERSON
- Mrs. Skeie- MAKAYLYN CURRY

### October's Students of the Month

- Mr. Astin- MADISON PEPE
- Mrs. Giovine- CARMEN FERRARA
- Mr. Hart- JACOB NOVAK
- Mrs. Kuchinsky- JORDAN MALANDRO
- Mrs. Reynolds- KAITLYN BROWN
- Mrs. Skeie- FAITH VAUGHAN

## Mr. Astin—Science

This promises to be a very interesting marking period! We'll be doing a lot of activities this marking period, including Egg Inertia, playing with a "rideable" hovercraft, and using the Starry Night program to bring the entire universe into the classroom! There will be a large project this marking period on the history of space exploration; a rubric will be sent home with the students in about 2 weeks. The students usually get into this project, as I allow them a lot of creative freedom, so I look forward to seeing what they do. By the end of the marking period, we will be talking about the life cycle of stars, what happens when our galaxy collides with Andromeda, and how big the Big Bang really was.

Knowledge of science and technology is increasingly important in our modern world. If we work together, we can make sure that this generation of students is prepared to take advantage of all the world has to offer. I look forward to communicating with you over this year, and welcome any and all questions or concerns you may have. Feel free to contact me at any time by voicemail or email ([jastin@srsd.org](mailto:jastin@srsd.org)). Let's look forward to a great year, and welcome all to the Comets Team!!

## Reminders:



- **November 17:** 1st Marking Period grades posted
- **November 23:** 11:50 dismissal
- **November 24-25:** Thanksgiving Recess (school closed)
- **November 30:** Middle School Lip Sync (7pm HS auditorium)
- **December 2:** Middle School dance
- **December 13:** Marking Period 2 progress reports posted
- **December 23:** 11:50 dismissal
- **December 24–January 2:** Winter Recess
- **January 16:** MLK's Birthday (school closed)
- **January 27:** 2nd Marking Period ends



*The Comets Team  
wishes you a  
Happy Holiday  
&  
a very  
Happy New Year!*

