

We are Garces Memorial

Be proud of where we have been.
Be a part of where we are going.

*Founded on Faith, Rooted in Tradition
Growing in Excellence*



We must have a vision for the future in order to achieve greatness.

*Let us always remember all we have accomplished while recognizing the
achievements that are yet to come.*

The Late 40's



On September 10, 1947 Garces Memorial High School opened as a co-educational, inter-parochial high school with an enrollment of 150 students. The new school was named for Padre Francisco Garces, a Franciscan missionary and the first European to cross the Kern River and enter the area known today as Bakersfield.

During the first year, the Christian Brothers were placed in charge of the boys division, teaching grades seven, eight and nine, while planning to add an additional grade each year. The girls division, plus the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade boys, were taught by the Dominican Sisters.



The 1948-49 school year saw a great many firsts for the young school: monthly masses and vocational conferences, a cultural guest artist series, an all-school play, and the commemorative publication of El Padre which honored the Dominican Sisters on their 60th anniversary on the Pacific Coast. The year also marked the end of the "Shamrocks" and the beginning of the "Rams."

The 50's & 60s

On Sunday, November 19, 1950, the statue of Our Lady of Grace and the grotto were unveiled and dedicated. It was donated by the Guido Martini family with Vincent Marracini donating his services in the construction of the shrine.



By September 1952, the seventh classroom unit was in place and the middle section of the football stadium was completed, enabling the facility to be used for the first time. The stadium was named in honor of Sam Tobias, an active school supporter and Booster Club member, the group that made the stadium possible.

In the mid 60s, enrollment once again began to increase. In December 1965, the school unveiled a ten-year building and modernization program to accommodate this new growth. In October 1966, work began on the plan which called for a new science wing, cafetorium, two eight-room classroom units and a new administration building. The first phase of the building project, completed in the spring of 1967, included an eight-classroom unit with four counseling rooms and a teachers lounge, and the removal of the two oldest classroom buildings directly opposite the administration building.



The 70's and 80's

In February of 1970, the Christian Brothers announced that due to a drastic decrease in vocations to their order they would be compelled to withdraw their members from the Garces staff. Due to the anticipated cost of filling this void with lay staff, it appeared that the diocese would be forced to close the school. With the support of the community, that would never happen. Garces Memorial is here today because of the tireless efforts of community leaders committed to keeping Garces Memorial High School's doors open and accessible to the students of Kern County.

In 1984, Monsignor Leddy Hall, named for the former pastor of St. Francis Church who did so much to keep the school in operation, was opened. Daily lunch service moved into the new cafetorium which provided a much needed space for school liturgies and assemblies.

In the Fall of 1986, students stepped into a new science building. The facility contained two biology labs, a chemistry lab and a general science room, each stocked with enough equipment to guarantee students plenty of hands-on instruction.



The 90's and 2000's

In the Fall 1997, Garces opened its newest facility, a state-of-the art library. In 1998 Garces added the Holy Spirit Courtyard to the campus chapel, and converted the Molly Breen Building into music and art rooms. Shortly after the work on the Molly Breen Building, landscaping and a block G was added to the west field hillside.



The 2000s have been filled with major projects on the Garces Memorial campus. Through the support of some very generous benefactors, Garces has been blessed with the Cerro Science Building, St. Dominick Student Chapel, Berchtold Music Building, Salvucci Aquatic Facility, Garces Tennis Complex, the addition of a state of the art training facility, new seating for both the home crowd and visitors side of Sam Tobias Field and much needed renovations to the Garces gym.

Academic and extra-curricular programs have also been added to the multitude of options for our Garces students, including the launch of a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) program, Broadcasting, Dance, Business Enterprise, Intro to Agriculture, and both boys and girls Water Polo programs.

In 2017, through the generosity of the Sanghera and Culbertson families, the school library was transformed into the Mehnga Sanghera Family Collaborative Learning Center. The students have thoroughly enjoyed the transformation of the library to a high tech learning center.

