



The Almanac

Mesa Union School District

Fall



2016

Volume 1

We have 180 days to

Develop competent readers, writers, and mathematicians

Cultivate scientists, explorers, innovators and communicators of learning

Foster compassion and empathy for others



The Mesa Way
School Beginnings
Mesa Moments



Welcome Back!

The growing season at Mesa Union School District has begun! During the course of the 2015-2016 school year, many seeds were planted! And through our cultivation, nurturing, and hard work these seeds have grown, thrived and are beginning to bloom. Seeds, such as establishing District Parent and District Parent English Learner Advisory Councils, infusing technology into our curriculum design by providing netbooks for all students in grades 3-8, increasing opportunities for students to access 21st Century Learning skills through inquiry and project based instruction, the adoption of new K-8 math materials, and introducing electives in the middle school, have begun to yield new opportunities for our students.

The Mesa Union School Community has forged ahead and developed new partnerships that have created distinct learning opportunities. For example, the partnership with the California Wildlife Service on the Butterfly Garden produced an outdoor learning classroom experience for students. Another partnership with MJP Technologies yielded a parent workshop on digital citizenship and internet safety. Partnering with Ventura 211 has increased access to community-based resources and a new budding partnership with California Lutheran University will strengthen reading literacy instruction in grades K-3.

As always, there is more work to be done, but before we get back in the field, I would like to thank each of you for your commitment to Mesa children by volunteering and sharing your talents and resources, which have created new opportunities for the students and families of the Mesa Union School Community. We look forward to partnering with our families again this year in the “work on the farm” that enhances our students’ education.

Respectfully yours,

Jeff Turner
Superintendent

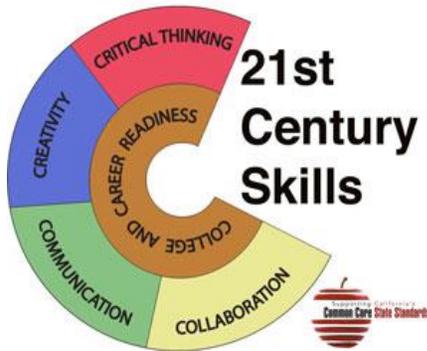
The Almanac is a new publication that will be published three times a year by the Office of the Superintendent at Mesa Union School District.

Mesa Union School District has served the children and families in this area since 1937, when Del Norte School District and Center School District merged to form one district. Eight acres were purchased for \$500 per acre from Mrs. Phillips, and in 1939, Mesa Union School was built. The original school consisted of three buildings and the custodian’s home. Three teachers taught 68 students. As the number of students increased, the school facilities grew. In 1951, two new classrooms, a cafeteria, and office were added. In 1951, the first kindergarten class was started; two additional rooms were constructed in 1956. Six additional classrooms were added in 1964, followed by six more in 1968. With the advent of class size reduction, four new classrooms were added in 1997 and 1998.

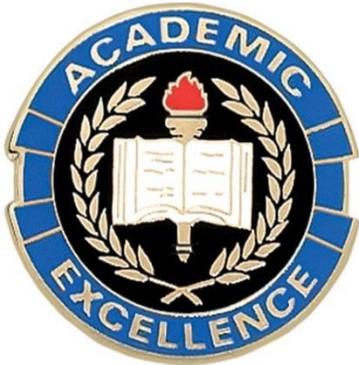
Today, Mesa Union School provides a first-class education for approximately 650 students in grades TK-8. The Board has overseen modernization projects in order to create classroom environments that reflect twenty-first century teaching and learning. In November 2002, our community passed Proposition H – a local school bond. Augmented with state Proposition 47 monies, Prop H funded modernization and construction of a state-of-the-art computer lab, library, science lab and multi-purpose room. In 2008, local residents passed Measure A, which funded a PE room, playfields, parking lot upgrades and a traffic light at the school entrance.

The Mesa Way

Mesa Union School District, containing a single school, Mesa Union School, has enjoyed a long tradition of excellence where children thrive in a community-focused, small school environment. Mesa Union School students actively participate in a rigorous and rewarding academic environment enriched with visual and performing arts, technology, robotics, athletics, and other extracurricular activities. Mesa, being a “District of Choice”, is avidly sought after by parents seeking a challenging and enriching education.



Mesa students build competencies valuable for today’s world, such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity/innovation, which are explicitly taught and developed while studying core subjects.



Mesa Union School District has a long tradition of student academic excellence. Mesa Union students consistently performed at all grade levels above the county and state averages in English Language/Literacy and Mathematics as measured by the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress.



Mesa Union students participate in a broad course of study that has infused technology into our daily instructional design. Through Inquiry and Project Based Learning students regularly participate in STEM activities in the classroom.

What We Love

We love to develop competent readers, writers, and mathematicians; cultivate scientists, explorers, innovators, and communicators of learning; and foster compassion and empathy for others.

We love to celebrate our students' academic success.

We love research, inquiry, exploration, and projects.



Mesa Union School District places a high value on the Visual and Performing Arts. Few elementary school districts have been able to replicate Mesa's vast opportunities to learn to play an instrument with Mr. Rhymes, join Mrs. Lindsey in her in-class choir, fire an original clay creation in the school's kiln, or join up with the Dance Club afterschool.



Mesa Union School District is "all in" when it comes to technology. Mesa reached its one to one computing goals in grades 3-8 during the course of the 2015-2016 school year. This fall second graders will also have netbooks at their disposal as the District's takes another step toward one to one computing in all grades.



Mesa is all about family. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom or participate in our Parent Faculty Organization, Education Foundation or a number of other leadership roles.

What

We Love

We love to show our creativity through song, dance, music, and the arts.

We love to use technology to connect, collaborate, and present our learning.

We love partnering with our families to create opportunities both within and outside of the classroom that support learning.

We love making Mesa memories!

School Beginnings



Dr. Stephen Bluestein, a career public school educator, has served students as an elementary teacher and as an elementary school principal. He brings a wealth of knowledge about teaching and administration to the Mesa Union School District.



Miss Brienne Poole was selected to teach middle school mathematics. She is a Ventura county native, who graduated from Rio Mesa High School, attended San Diego State University where she earned a degree in mathematics and went on to complete her single subject math credential. She has taught pre-calculus and calculus.



Mrs. Kristina Garza was selected to fill the vacant first grade position. She earned a degree in Early Childhood Development from Vanguard University and a multiple subject teaching credential from the University of Laverne.



Mrs. Roxane Sonnenschein has extensive experience as a data programmer, technical and computer helpdesk technician, as well as technology training development and delivery



Mrs. Michelle Waggoner will be moving from her fourth grade team teaching assignment to teaching Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) and will also be working with struggling readers as part of the District's Response to Intervention model.

What

We Love

Miss Poole comes to Mesa with high praise from her colleagues and will bring an exceptional math foundation and youthful exuberance to our math department.

Mrs. Garza's pre-school background and experience will make her a strong addition to our first grade team.

Mrs. Sonnenschein's real world experience will expand 21st Century Learning for students and teachers.

Mrs. Waggoner was key in the development of the current Gifted and Talented Education Program. She is an exceptional teacher and will continue to support GATE students in the manner that students and families are accustomed.

Mesa Moments

Math Curriculum

Students in all grades will be learning from a new math curriculum during the 2016-2017 school year. Teachers have participated in professional development in the summer as we prepare to introduce the Math Expressions Program to students in grades K through 5 and the College Preparatory Math Program to students in grades 6 through 8. Both programs provide a balance of procedural, conceptual, and problem-solving skills.



The Road to Electives



Until this year, middle school students participated in an exploratory class, in addition to their core content courses. New this year, students in grades 6 through 8 will be assigned an elective each semester, which will meet daily. Over the summer, teachers worked to develop a new master schedule, course descriptions, and curricula in preparation for instructing the following new classes:

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Sixth Grade | Intro to Agriculture | Computational Thinking |
| Seventh Grade | Oceanography | Poetry |
| Eighth Grade | Drama/Theater | Robotics |

In 2017-2018 we hope to create additional course offerings and further develop a middle school environment where students are able to select their own electives.

What

We Love

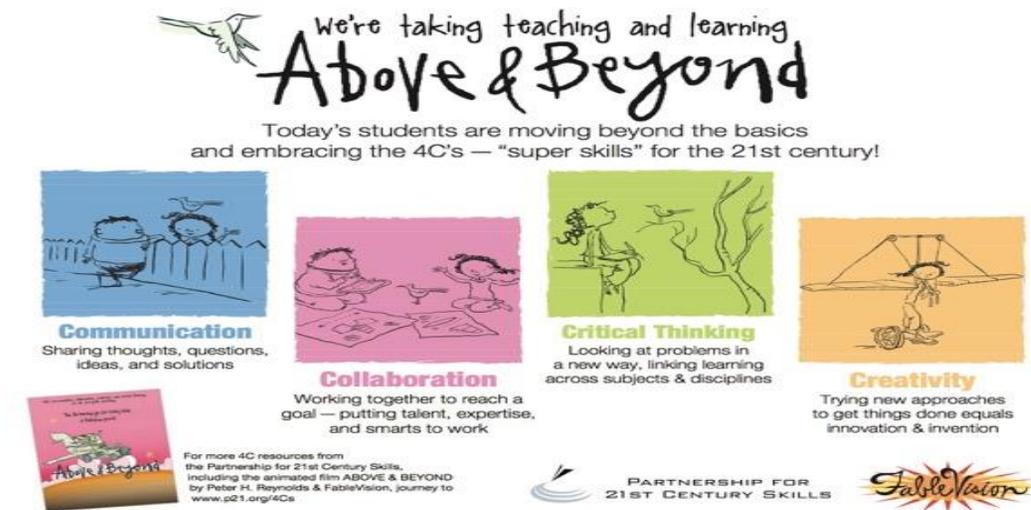
We love building exemplary programs that provide teachers with resources and tools that bring math alive for students in the classroom.

We love creating new opportunities through electives that expand students' learning and prepare them for college and career.

After-school Programming Expansion

The Full STEAM Ahead Program has expanded its reach to serve students in grades 1 through 6. To learn more about the after-school programming, please contact Anthony Olivares, Coordinator, at (805)485-1411. During the 2016-2017 school year, the Homework Club will be starting during the first week of school. To learn more about how to participate, please contact Irene Ramirez at (805)485-1411.

21st Century Learning



Currently, students are learning 21st century skills that encompass Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity. Mesa Union will be introducing students to a 5th C to cultivate school connectedness and to foster compassion and empathy for one another. Look to future publications as the school introduces the next C!

Launching a New Website

Mesa Union School has rolled out a new website. Changes are being made every day. Check it out at mesaschool.org.

What

We Love

We love after-school programming that integrates science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics daily.

We love taking teaching "Above and Beyond" with the 4 C's.

We love the opportunity to shape Mesa's school climate through the introduction of a 5th C.

We love the new vibrant and dynamic school website.



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