

Friday Memo

for the Week of January 27, 2017



We have 72 days to:

Develop competent readers, writers, and mathematicians

Cultivate scientists, explorers, innovators and communicators of learning

Foster compassion and empathy for others



Congratulations Trustees Rodriguez and Sullivan as they officially took their Oath of Office on Tuesday evening. A special thank you to Trustee Sullivan for attending despite feeling ill. I also share my appreciation to all Trustees for their leadership and support as together we move the District forward.

Thank you Trustees for your leadership and commitment to participating in Board workshops. Tuesday evening's session not only strengthened our governance team, but it was a wonderful way to assimilate new trustee, Carolyn Rodriguez, into the group. The time of reflection, provided all a chance to look up from our work and identify our accomplishments.

Below is a quick list of items we have accomplished on behalf of students!

We have.....

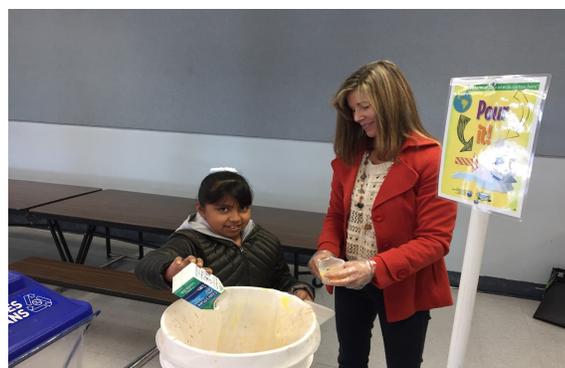
* Transitioned to a modified block schedule at the middle school that includes electives.



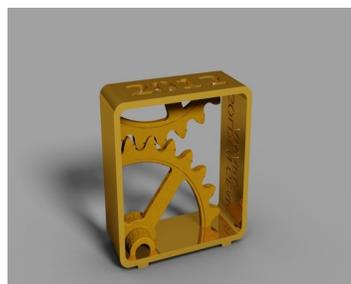
- * Created a one to one computing environment for students
- * Provided new presentation and printing hardware in every classroom and common areas.
- * Piloted and adopted new K-8 math materials.
- * Expanded summer, after-school and intervention supports for students.
- * Made significant facility improvements
- * Selected new site leadership
- * Established Parent and Parent English Learner Advisory Committees
- * Increased partnerships with community agencies, universities, and businesses
- * Redesigned the District and School webpages



Through a partnership with Harrison Waste Management, custodial, noon supervisors, and kitchen staff have received training and materials to support the District's campaign to reduce waste through composting and recycling. The picture to the left shows how Mesa Union students are doing their part by recycling their milk cartons in the cafeteria.



Mrs. Lisa McCullough from the Ventura Integrated Waste Management Division and Donald Sealund from E.J. Harrison Waste Management worked with students and staff as we fully implemented the Mesa Recycling and Composting Initiative. We have reduced our trash in the cafeteria from 8 trash cans a day to 2. The student body continues to support their Keep Calm and Put the Waste in the Right Place campaign to build awareness in our students, promote school pride, and build community. Mesa Union's recycling program is going school-wide. Mesa students and families will see paired receptacles throughout the campus. Black lids indicate receptacles for trash and Blue for recycling. To the right, Francisco and I are adding recycling signage to all blue recycling cans.

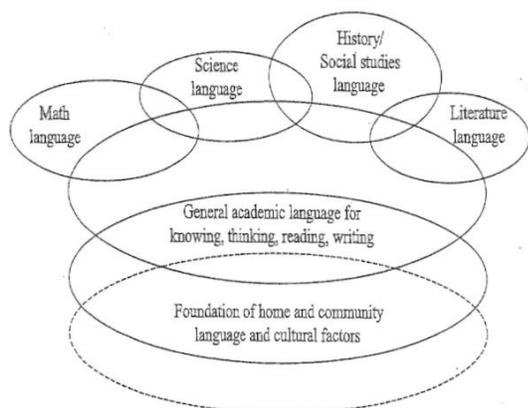


Guests from Ventura County STEAM visited Mesa's Full STEAM Ahead After-school Program. I have included a comment from Dr. Phil Hampton, professor from California State University Channel Islands. "I want to thank you and everyone at Mesa Union for being such amazing hosts of our Tour de STEAM visit. I was extremely impressed with the Full STEAM Ahead Program and how you have built such an outstanding program using your and Addie's creativity and hard work. The program is a perfect

example of high quality STEAM learning. Principal Bluestein and Superintendent Turner have every reason to be proud of Full STEAM Ahead and what it is doing to provide your kids with high quality STEAM education." Mesa Union's after-school program is a finalist for the 2016-2017 Golden Gear Award recognizing schools for exemplary expanded learning programs.

Mesa teachers are committed to building their own professional capacity through professional development as demonstrated below.

Figure 2.1
Overlapping Variations of Language That Develop over Time



Middle school teachers participated in English Language Development training with Armando Zuniga, Ventura County Office of Education content specialist, where they focused on strategies that build academic language. Research shows that middle school students spend only 2 and a half minutes a day using academic language. Through the use of prompts, sentence starters, teacher repetition, pace and emphasis, educators are able to model and assist students in writing, as well as guiding students in clarifying what they are attempting to say. Figure 2.1 shows how students develop academic language.



ELA/ELD pilot teachers completed the K-8 textbook adoption evaluation process at the Ventura County Office Education Curriculum Library. Mesa's pilot will be launched on Monday, February 24. Mesa Union has selected Houghton Mifflin-Harcourt and McGraw Hill materials to pilot this spring. I anticipate that the District will have a recommendation to the Board at the June Regular Board Meeting.



K-5 teachers had the opportunity to observe and discuss best practices identified within English Language Development (ELD) lessons that were developed by their colleagues along with the support of Anna Belitski, ELD content specialist from Ventura County Office of Education. Co-teaching and reflection are powerful elements of successful professional development and this is one way Mesa is evolving as an organization.

Mrs. Echo Lee, Teacher on Special Assignment from the Rio School District, worked with teachers after school to input newly developed K-3 benchmark and performance task scores into to Mesa's EADMS data software. We continue to march towards constructing a systematic assessment model.



The Parent Faculty Organization' "Restaurant Night" at Chipotle was a big hit with Mesa families. Chipotle donated 50% of the proceeds of the evening's sale!

Many thanks go out to our wonderful Mesa PFO. On Tuesday, the PFO ladies presented every teacher and staff member with flowers they had donated. The ladies spent all morning preparing the bouquets. Everyone was touched. It was such a nice treat.



Classes in the elementary school celebrated and commemorated Chinese New Year. Grades kindergarten, first, third, and fourth had major activities and worked with our community partner, *Panda Express*, for catering the event. Super volunteer parents Peter and Dana Lan were on campus giving Chinese new year gift envelopes to the students as well. Here are some photos to enjoy.

