

1575 LEHIGH STREET
BOULDER, COLORADO
80305
PHONE: (303) 494-4704
FAX: (303) 494-5908



The Mesa Messenger

February 2009

Special Interest Articles:

- Message from the Principal
- Valentines for Firefighters
- YMCA Kinder-Skate Program
- Thriving During the Elementary Years: Identifying Learning Problems Early

Individual Highlights:

Counseling Center	2
Pizza Anyone?	3
Health Room Scripts	4
TAG Talk	5
Happenings	6
Budget Forums	7
Wellness Seminars	8
Science Fair Spotlight	9
Library News	10
Skip-Its Workshop	11
School Attendance	12
PTO Corner	13

Message from the Principal

Dear Mesa Families,

The newsletter is packed this month, so I'll keep my part short. I really just want to call your attention to two upcoming opportunities for parents.

The Parent Survey

Each year, the Boulder Valley School District administers a survey of parents about their satisfaction with various aspects of the local

school and school district. This survey will be in your child's March 13th Friday Folder. Typically, the Mesa community has a survey response rate of approximately 30%, which is a good rate for a survey. However, I encourage each of you to take the time to complete and submit the survey. I would love to see our community reach a rate of 50% or more. The feedback you provide is valuable.

School Budget Discussions

On the evening of February 25th, Mesa was honored to host Briggs Gamblin, BVSD Director of Communications. Briggs provided information and perspective on the state

funding that schools and school districts receive. Further, he discussed the current Colorado state budget crisis and its impact on Boulder Valley. **For parents wishing to discuss Mesa's specific school budget, I invite you to attend a community meeting with me on March 10th at 6:15pm in the Mesa gym and hosted by our PTO (school-aged child care provided). We will discuss school staffing, class size, para support, academic tutor support, and other questions pertaining to school budget.** I hope you can attend.

Thanks for your time in reading.

Go Mustangs!

Josh



PE Class News

Jump Rope for Heart was a huge success this year! Thank you for all of your continued support! I'm still working on the total donation amount for the American Heart Association and will let you know once it's all tallied. The kids did a great job at their grade

level events, and Mesa has some of the best jump ropers around! The students who participated in the after school jump rope clinic also did a great job and were able to demonstrate some of their best skills!

~ Jacy Bruno



Counseling Center

Many parents have asked the question, "What is one of the most prevalent issues that you see in the schools today?" My answer is stress. Especially in our society today, stress seems to be a prevalent factor that affects our health and well being, both for adults and children. Here is an overview on stress and how to help children manage their stress.

What is Stress?

Stress is a way that our body responds to the demands that are made upon us by the environment, our relationships, and our perceptions and interpretations of those demands. We all experience stress. Stress can be considered good or bad. Good stress is when there's an optimal amount of stress in your body to create energy and motivation to deal with and meet a challenge. It encourages us to do our best and develop positive coping strategies. When we have good stress, we are able to access our problem-solving skills and use them effectively. Contrary, bad stress

occurs when our coping mechanisms are compromised by overwhelming feelings of stress, and we do not function at our best. Stress can become distress when we are unable to cope or when we believe that we do not have the ability to meet the challenge. It is important to note that one person may see the same challenge or event very differently than the next. A roller coaster ride may be thrilling for one person but very stressful to another. The solution is to adapt, change, and find methods to turn the bad stress into good stress. There are many causes for stress for children. They can be at school, at home, or peer related. For example, bad stress can occur when children are over-scheduled, families lack a consistent routine or there's a significant change in the family situation, unstructured classrooms or unclear or unreasonable expectations, changing schools, having to deal with a bully, trying to fit in, or poor nutrition/sleep habits.

Symptoms of Stress in Children:

- Irritability or unusual emotionality
- Unexplained fears/increased anxiety (may become clingy)
- Sleep difficulty or nightmares
- Regression to earlier developmental levels
- Inability to concentrate
- Isolation from family activities or peer relationships
- Drop in grades or other functioning
- Drug or alcohol experimentation
- Toileting or eating problems

How to Prevent Stress:

- Teach positive problem-solving and coping skills
- Consistent, positive discipline
- Close, supportive relationships at home, school, with peers and adults
- Develop competencies in academic, social, extracurricular, and life skills
- Clear and consistent expectations at home and school
- Ability to express feelings appropriately
- Permission and ability to

- make mistakes
- Good nutrition and exercise

How Parents Can Help:

Be aware of any changes in your child's behavior or emotions
Keep your child aware of anticipated family changes
Build trust with your child
Allow your child to be a part of decision-making when appropriate
Be available to talk with your child and openly listen to their feelings
Monitor your own stress level (take care of yourself)
Encourage and practice physical activity, good nutrition, and rest
Help your child select appropriate extracurricular activities and limit over-scheduling
Seek assistance of a physician, psychologist, or counselor if stress becomes a concern

SOURCES: Adapted from "Stress in Children: Strategies for Parents and Educators" by Ellis P. Copeland and "Helping Children at Home and School II: Handout for Parents and Educators"

~ Debora L. Price
School Psychologist

The Big Chill

At Mesa, students have outdoor recesses unless it's dangerously cold or windy. Children should come to school with appropriate clothing to keep them warm: hats or hoods, gloves, boots, and a warm coat. Snow pants are another suitable

option. Children may not stay inside at the Mesa Office or in the classroom during recess, and the expectation is that **all students** go out for the recess break wearing appropriate clothing.

encourage peer socialization, and ensure much-needed daily exercise. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the principal, Mr. Baldner, in the Mesa Office.

Outdoor play can foster creativity,

Thank you for your cooperation.

Pony Express Update

We want to thank everyone who participated in the Pony Express this year. The children had a blast delivering your mail on (stick) horseback. We collected \$400, all of which was donated to Room to Read, an organization that builds libraries in third world countries.

Kudos to all of you! Also, a very special 'thank you' goes out to Ruth Chou, the wrangler for all the little riders.

See you next year!

~ Mrs. A.

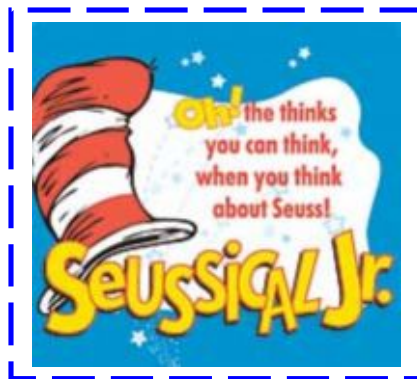


Music Notes

The Mesa M&M's have been working very hard on *Seussical!*

We will have a set construction day on Saturday, February 21st, and plan to begin at 10:00am. M&M's and M&M parents: please feel free to come and help. Don't forget to wear your work clothes and bring your elbow grease!

5th graders, we will also have our



"tech" rehearsal on Sunday, March 1st. This is your only opportunity to practice with lights, sound, and costumes before our shows the following week.

Seussical will be performed on March 4th (5C), March 5th (5G), and March 6th (5K) at 1:00pm and 7:00pm!

~ Sarah Knoebel

Valentines for Firefighters

Thank you to everyone who baked cookies for the firefighters. We put together a festive assortment of cookies for each of the seven Boulder City fire stations and delivered them on Friday, February 13th.

Please let your children know that the firefighters were delighted to be receiving the decorative Valentine's banners and the yummy treats! Most of the

firefighters told the girls delivering the treats that they had just started a 48-hour shift so would be spending Valentine's Day at the station rather than with their families. They were glad to have something special to celebrate the day.

Thanks again.

~ Diana Fields and Peggy Kaufman



Pizza Anyone?

BVSD Nutrition Services is pleased to announce that elementary schools will serve Bruno's whole wheat cheese pizza for lunch every other week beginning March 11th. Bruno's is locally owned and operated and has been providing fresh pizza to BVSD secondary schools for the past two years.

Bruno's will deliver to Mesa on March 11th; April 1st, 15th, and 29th; and May 13th. On those days that Bruno's is not delivered, the kitchen will serve Italian Cheesy Toast.

Please contact Nutrition Services at (303) 447-5064 with any questions.

March CSAP Tests are Here!

CSAP testing resumes for 3rd grade students on Monday, March 2nd and will include two sessions each of Math and Writing. 5th graders will also begin on Monday, March 2nd, with three sessions of Math followed by three sessions each of Reading, Writing, and Science. 4th graders begin their CSAP tests on Tuesday, March 3rd, with three sessions each of Reading, Writing, and Math. *Parents, please plan ahead so that we maximize attendance on CSAP days!*



The district expects to receive the 3rd grade Reading results in early May. CSAP results from all March testing will arrive in late August. Parents will receive the CSAP reading results in May directly from the school, while the August results will be sent via US mail from the BVSD Education Center. Please make sure that an accurate mailing address is on file at the school to ensure delivery of CSAP results.

CSAP results for the school are first reported in late July or early August. These results are then used in calculating a school accountability report for publication in late fall. While these tests are important, they are only one way in which we measure our students' achievement and the success of our school. Teachers' daily observations tell us more about the progress that each child is making. CSAP tests and other external tests are an additional way of measuring achievement that can offer information about our progress and areas to improve.

Mesa Health Room Scripts

Cold or Flu: Which One Does your Child Have?

Both the cold and the flu are respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. Typically, the cold is milder than the flu and generally doesn't result in serious health problems.

Sometimes it may be difficult to tell the difference between the two, but according to the National Institutes of Health, there are some obvious differences in symptoms.



Symptoms the cold and flu may have in common~

General aches and pains: colds sometimes have these, but they are common and often severe with the flu

Fatigue and weakness: colds are sometimes associated with these, but they usually occur with the flu and can last up to 2-3 weeks

Stuffy nose and sneezing: are common with colds and may occur with the flu

Sore throat: is common with colds and may occur with the flu

Chest discomfort and cough: mild to moderate with a hack for colds, but can be more severe with the flu

Symptoms that are not shared by the colds and flu~

Fevers: rare in colds, but usually

occur with the flu (100°F-102°F, occasionally higher in younger children)

Headache: rare in colds, but common with the flu

Extreme exhaustion: never occurs with colds, but it usually occurs with the flu, especially at the beginning of the illness

Complications of the cold vs. the flu~

The cold: sinus congestion, middle ear infection, and asthma

The flu: bronchitis, pneumonia, and can be life threatening

If you think your child is suffering from the flu, play it safe and talk to your child's pediatrician.

SOURCES: National Institutes of Health and National Institutes of Allergy & Infectious Diseases

TAG Talk

Congratulations to our 5th grade **Knowledge Bowl Team** who recently competed in a national computer-based competition called "Knowledge Master Open" and found out on January 22nd that they had placed 1st in the state of Colorado and 9th, nationally, out of 233 teams competing.

Knowledge Master Open requires students, in order to be successful, to synthesize knowledge from a wide range of topics and subject areas. No answer to a question is a "Yes" or "No" response, but in order to garner the greatest number of points, students must analyze the question, synthesize the knowledge, and answer the question, as a group, within one minute -- OR -- for bonus points -- within ten seconds. Now, that's a tight time frame and requires tight teamwork. As Coach, I'm really proud of how well our students cooperated in search of the answers.

The following students are part of the fall Knowledge Bowl Team: Nicholas Baer, Brendan Bauer, Abby Bloomfield, Zaven Christianian, Peter Curtiss, Audrey DeHaan, Bridger Fedor, Connor Flynn, Maya Frost-Belansky, Logan Garby, Kate Hartten, Adrienne Holland, Will Kaufman, Sydney Keenan, Lisa Kilmer, Katy Lawrence, Brenna Raeder, Sienna Sewell, Matthieu Tapolsky, Ben Thompson, Piper Triggs, Luke Walsh, Kirsten Walters, and Brandon Warren.

Our **Chess League team** has made it into the Finalist playoffs for Boulder Valley Chess League competition and will be playing against three other teams during the coming week. Please hold good thoughts for their final games. Mesa will be represented by Kirsten Walters, Hongming Chen, Nikko Baer, Thomas Kakatsakis, and Sam Dusinberre, who will play boards in that order. Kirk Johnson has been our parent coach

for Chess League Team endeavors. A very loud and very public Thanks to you, Kirk, for all the work put into League play, hosting other schools, and now playoffs.

Our **Chess Club** continues to meet on Tuesday afternoons after school in the Library. Although somewhat crowded and noisy because we have so many children attending, I do think the students are really learning to play Chess. Our meetings are a combination of teaching specific moves and free play. We have a super-dedicated mom, Laura Spicer, who "spearheads" Chess Club and conducts a special "Royal Court" for all our young Princes and Princesses of Chess. Aided by multiple parents who ply our young chess players with "meat" and "ale" (snacks and water), we really have a gala time every Tuesday afternoon. Many Thanks to you, Laura!

Did you know that our budding **Mathletes** have been meeting Monday mornings before school in order to sharpen their Math skills and field a number of heavy-thinking challenges? I am most grateful to parents Susan Hollowell and Martin Boyd for their leadership and teaching in this realm. I have trouble getting my eyes open at 7:00am, let alone start thinking about Math formulas. Many thanks, Susan and Martin!

Yes, we are starting **Junior Great Books** again very soon. Thanks to parent Adrienne Lee's capable skills of organization and teaching, I find one of my favorite activities just whirring away without even worrying about it, until I realize it is the day for me to train the new parent leaders. Hats off to you, Adrienne!

You can witness our Mesa children's creative problem solving, as demonstrated within a team activity, on April 4th at Monarch High School. Our school is fielding nine -- yes, 9 -- **Destination Imagination** teams on that day, and we have many parent coaches busily getting ready for that momentous occasion. Clustered mostly by grade

level with seven students to a team, each child will have his/her creative thinking skills put to a serious test on the 4th. Come join us for the merriment; the public is welcome to witness the performances. Without these parent coaches, obviously we could not have nine teams. Sooo -- thanks to Aline Christianian, Adam Fedor, Tammy Livingstone, Anne Hedlund, Jennifer O'Brien, Kate Kupferer, Diana Fields, Wendy Lembeck, Cassy Matthews, Andrea Runkel, Cheryl McCutchan, and Christy Earles.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Our own Mesa **Spelling Bee** is coming after Spring Break. Help your children polish up their spelling skills, and we'll have a good ole-fashioned Spelling Bee. More information later.

Well, I think you can see that we have a lot of extracurricular enrichments and extensions going on right now, not to mention the P.E., Art, and Music events which are happening around this time as well. All of these are open to all Mesa students, and WE COULD NOT DO ALL THIS WITHOUT OUR WONDERFUL PARENT COMMUNITY. That is just what I think of Mesa as being: a grand community, focused around our children's education and well-being. Thank you one and all for helping! If I have forgotten to mention anyone, my apologies!

If you wish to have your child **nominated and evaluated for TAG at Mesa**, you can start the process by picking up a nomination form from the Mesa Office and returning the completed nomination to my mailbox. Testing for TAG will take place in May. If you are in doubt about what to do, either talk with your child's classroom teacher or catch me for a quick conversation. If your child has already been nominated but not yet evaluated, you do not need to nominate again.

~ Betsy Puls

Share-A-Coat Thank You

Thank you for making this year's Share-A-Coat drive a success. With your help, we collected over 3,000 coats and many other winter garments, including sweaters, snowsuits, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots from Boulder County schools and local businesses. On Saturday, December 20th, many of these garments were given to the less fortunate people of Boulder County as part of the Holiday Giving Program. Other garments were given to various charitable organizations for distribution throughout the winter.

Below are the results of the coat contest:

Schools with 500+ Students

1st Place: Nevin Platt / Platt

Choice Middle School ~ \$150

2nd Place: Crestview Elementary ~ \$100

3rd Place: Foothill Elementary ~ \$50

Schools with 350-500 Students

1st Place: Manhattan Middle School ~ \$150



2nd Place: Douglass Elementary ~ \$100

3rd Place: Mesa Elementary ~ \$50

Schools with Fewer Than 350 Students

1st Place: Jamestown Elementary ~ \$150

2nd Place: Nederland Elementary ~ \$100

3rd Place: Bridge School ~ \$50

Thanks again for your help. Without you, this program would not be possible.

~ Bob Harberg
Boulder Valley Rotary Club,
Share-a-Coat Coordinator

Happenings

March 1st
Seussical Rehearsals

March 2nd
3rd Grade CSAP testing resumes (Math and Writing)

March 2nd
5th Grade CSAP testing begins (Math, Reading, Writing, and Science)

March 2nd
Yoga begins, 3:00-4:00pm

March 3rd
4th Grade CSAP testing begins (Reading, Writing, and Math)

March 3rd
PTO, 6:15pm

March 4th
Seussical (5C), 1:00pm and 7:00pm

March 5th
Seussical (5G), 1:00pm and 7:00pm

March 6th
Seussical (5K), 1:00pm and 7:00pm

March 9th
2009-2010 K-Care Applications Due

March 16th
All School Assembly, 8:45am

March 17th
Mesa Art Show, 7:00-8:00pm

March 19th
1st Grade Dinosaur Guest Speaker

March 23rd – 27th
Spring Break, No School



District Budget Information Forums

Do you have questions or suggestions about how district money is spent?

Please plan to attend:

**BVSD Superintendent's
2009-2010
Budget Information and
Discussion Forums**

March 4th ~ 6:00-7:30pm
Nederland Middle/Senior High
597 County Rd. 30, Nederland



March 5th ~ 6:00-7:30pm
Broomfield High School
1 Eagle Way, Broomfield

March 10th ~ 10:00-11:30am
Lafayette Public Library
775 W. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

March 11th ~ 6:00-7:30pm
Boulder High School
1604 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder

All forums are open to parents, staff, district committee members, and the community at large.

Given the effects of the economic downturn on education funding, BVSD seeks input from a variety of sources regarding its annual budget. Part of the district's input gathering process is its annual open forums about the district's budget deliberations. While people are, as always, free to



comment on the annual budget during the public participation part of a school board meeting, it is at the Superintendent's Budget Forums that the fiscal issues facing BVSD schools in the coming year will receive their most thorough public opportunity for review, discussion, and input.

For more information, please contact the BVSD Communications Office at (303) 245-5824 or by email at communications@bvsd.org

Spring Break Classes Offered Through BVSD Lifelong Learning

See complete class descriptions at www.bvsd.org/LLL (connect to our course area to register) or call (303) 499-1125 x222.

**Arts: Spring Break Art Camp
Ages 6-9**
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9:00am-12:00pm; 4 sessions starting March 23rd and ending March 26th
Cost: \$135, Materials Fee: \$0
Location: Boulder - Community Montessori



**Adventure: Kids Intro to Rock Climbing ~ Spring Break Camp
Ages 6-12**
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 1:00pm- 3:30pm; 5 sessions starting March 23rd and ending March 27th
Cost: \$145, Materials Fee: \$0
Location: Boulder - The Spot Bouldering Gym

**Adventure: Kids Intro to Rock Climbing ~ Spring Break Camp
Ages 6-8**
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 10:00am-12:30pm; 5 sessions starting March 23rd and ending March 27th
Cost: \$145, Materials Fee: \$0
Location: Boulder - The Spot Bouldering Gym

YWCA: Techno Adventure for



**Boys and Girls
Grades 2-5**
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 8:30am-3:30pm; 4 sessions starting March 23rd and ending March 26th
Cost: \$169, Materials Fee: \$0
Location: Boulder - YWCA of Boulder

~ Julie Kurzawa
BVSD Lifelong Learning Registrar

Healthy Learning Paths to Offer Free Child Wellness Seminars

Plan to attend **free** child wellness seminars sponsored by Healthy Learning Paths, a Broomfield foundation that integrates wellness and learning for children. Teachers and child care professionals can receive 1½ contact hours for each course **if they pre-register** at info@healthylearningpaths.org or (303) 464-7191. *Parents are welcome to attend, too!*

The upcoming Saturday programs are:

February 28th ~ Move and Groove

Learn effective strategies for planning and participating in fun movement activities to build upon motor skills in the classroom and at home. Wear comfortable clothing! Presenter: Mary Haldy, MS Occupational Therapist



YMCA Kinder-Skate Program

The YMCA of Boulder Valley offers a Learn to Skate program designed specifically for the kindergartener. The entire focus is on learning skating skills & having fun! Classes are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:35pm and Mondays and Wednesdays at 9:45am in order to accommodate both morning and afternoon kindergarten students. Classes are also available on Tuesdays at 4:00pm and Saturday at 11:00am. Fees are \$56 for YMCA members and \$90 for non-members.

The Learn to Skate program offers a great community atmosphere with friendly instructors and strives to instill the YMCA Character Development Core Values of "Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility" in all of its skaters.

Sign up today for the March/April session of Kinder-Skate. **Spaces are limited and fill up quickly.** You may register online at www.ymcabv.org or at the Arapahoe or Mapleton Center. Please contact Holly Tracy at (303) 664-5455 for questions.

March 21st ~ No Nuggets, Just Chicken

Discover tips for teaching kids about healthy food choices as well as meet goals in your wellness curriculum. Presenter: Karrie Bach, Registered Dietician

April 25th ~ Tickle Your Senses

Learn how senses develop, understand sensory differences, and find out how sensory information is processed as children learn and behave.

Presenter: Mary Haldy, MS Occupational Therapist

All classes are held from 10:30am to noon in the Eisenhower Room at the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library, 3 Community Park Road, in Broomfield.

Check out the **free** Friday classes for kids offered on Fridays from 10:30-11:30am: Rockin' Away the Winter Blues, Sleep Monsters, Be Gone!, Snappy Snacks, and Summer Safety & Fun. Call (720) 887-2315 for details.

Brochures are available at the Mesa Morning Table.

~ Anita Schumann
Mesa Wellness Lead, Garden To Table Program



Kinder-Skate Skill Levels:

Level 1, Snowballs ~ Beginner class, no skating experience. Intro to falling and getting up properly, marching, march and glide, dip, toe kisses.

Level 2, Snowbears ~ Beginner class, some skating experience. Intro to falling and getting up properly, marching, 2 foot glide, dip (moving), forward hourglasses, hop, backward wiggles, snowplow stop.

Level 3, Snowbirds ~ Snowplow stop (left, right), 2 foot glide, pineapples, forward hourglasses (advanced), backward hourglasses, one foot glide, one foot glide, curves.

Level 4, Penguins ~ Forward skating (no marching), forward hourglasses (across rink), one foot glide, backward hourglasses, forward one foot sculling, edge balances on circle, 2 foot turn, slalom.

Science Fair Spotlight

You're invited to be a scientist at the Mesa Science Fair on April 16th and 17th!

The goal of the Science Fair is to provide students with an opportunity to develop a project using the scientific method and to share the knowledge they gain with their school community. This is a completely non-competitive event – the prize is learning from the joys (and perhaps frustrations) of “doing science.”



Join the fun and learn as you go!

Step 1: Find a question you want to investigate. Keep it simple and find something that interests you. Books and booklets with ideas for projects are in the school library, the public library, and on the Internet.

Step 2: Make a plan for your project.

- Think about what the answer to your question might be – this will be your hypothesis.
- Make a general research plan to test if your hypothesis is true or false.
- Ask more specific questions, and these will guide you to the kinds of data you need to collect.
- Figure out the methods and experiments you will use to collect your data.

Step 3: Complete a *Project*



Proposal Form by Friday, February 27th. The form is available at the Mesa Office and Mesa Morning Table. Students may work alone or in pairs, but both partners' names/signatures should be on the form. Members of the Science Fair Committee will review project proposals and return them in early March.

If you have questions, please contact the Science Fair Coordinators, Julie Gelderloos at gelderloosmw@msn.com or (303) 554-5814 or Clare Stocker at cstocker@du.edu or (303) 499-6234.

Student Enrollment Online (SEO)

SEO made its debut on January 5th after a solid year of research and development. This new system enables parents to enroll their students in BVSD schools through an online process.

From now on, all students who are new or returning to BVSD from out-of-district are enrolled online through SEO by their parents or guardians. This enrollment must be to their neighborhood school or to the school for which their open enrollment application has already been accepted and confirmed. Parents who have completed the open enrollment process receive a “letter of acceptance/confirmation” for their child’s new school assignment, which they must return to the Open Enrollment



Office before using SEO to enroll their child in that new school.

Before SEO, the enrollment process was entirely paper-based: parents filled out all the necessary paperwork and delivered it to the schools, where registrars entered the information into the district’s Infinite Campus database. Although parents will still need to deliver some paperwork to their

schools, the majority of the enrollment process is done online from any computer with internet access.

For families who do not have access to an internet connection, computers have been set up at about a third of BVSD schools, with plans to eventually expand these SEO kiosks into all schools throughout BVSD. The SEO enrollment screens display in English or Spanish, depending upon which language the user selects.

For more information, contact the Student Enrollment Office at enrollment.helpdesk@bvsd.org or (303) 447-5247.

Library News

We have been reading books that were nominated for the Colorado Children's Book Award for some time. They have now had a chance to vote.

The younger grades had a chance to hear almost all of the Picture book nominees read aloud. The upper grades have heard a number of those and been introduced to the chapter book nominees. In asking them, it sounds like students from many grades have also read a number of the chapter books. Therefore, we have a pretty well qualified group of voters and we will soon have the vote results for Mesa, but the award winner will be announced in March.

Parents, I want to be sure you are all aware of the parent section of

our library. We have a number of books about raising kids and dealing with various special needs and talents. If you would like to fill out an application for a parent library card, there are forms on the bookcase just to the right as you come in the door (which is the bookcase for the parent collection). Please feel free to stop by and browse. I also want to let you know that we welcome suggestions for additions to that or the rest of the library.

Also, don't forget to say thank you to Dr. Seuss on his upcoming birthday, March 2nd, for helping so many young people get started down the path of enjoying reading. (I know I'm included if you look back a few years.)

~ Stan Converse, Teacher Librarian



From the Garden...

Mesa Garden Challenges You to Save the Environment

Starting this month, with the help of CarbonRally.com, we will offer you a new monthly challenge to lead a more sustainable life. Parents and teachers, your family can go online and register as an individual or join our team at

<http://www.carbonrally.com/teams/663>

By creating an account, you can track challenges and the amount of CO2 reductions by taking on the different challenges. In the future, we may compete against other area schools to see who can lead the way to a more sustainable future.

The first challenge is "Feel The Hov." We are challenging you to share a ride to work or school once a week. Carpooling just one day reduces your carbon emissions by 25 pounds!

Spring Dig Day ~ Save the Date!

Dig in and volunteer! We will prepare the garden for plantings and digging a new section of garden on Saturday, May 2nd. Please mark your calendar and join us.

Spring Cleaning? Don't Throw it Out, Throw it our Way!

The garden is looking for new and gently-used tools to have on hand. Here is our wish list: 6 weeding forks, 6 shovels, 2 rakes, 6 hand trowels, 2 picks, 3 border spades, and 3 8" wide digging forks. Anything you can donate is greatly appreciated.



Free Class on Beginning Veggie Gardening

"Beginner's Guide to Vegetable Growing" is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18th, and Thursday, March 19th, 6:00pm - 9:00pm, at the Boulder County Recycling Center, 1901 63rd St., Boulder. An introduction to the joy and ease of growing food, this class is for BEGINNERS, not experienced veggie gardeners. There's no cost for the class. Participants are asked donate some of their food to a food bank instead. Call the CSU Extension Master Gardeners Office to register, (303) 678-6238.

Get Involved

If you're interested in getting involved with our effort, please contact Cassy at cassymatthews@comcast.net. You can also follow efforts via our Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mesaG2T/>.

Spring Fling Workshop ~ Hosted by Boulder Valley "Skip-Its"

The Spring Fling Workshop will be a day of fun for jumping enthusiasts! Both beginning and advanced skippers are sure to learn new skills. Experienced coaches and world class skippers will be there to instruct participants. Learn new skipping styles, make friends from other areas, and share your ideas about this great sport! Teams from Puerto Rico and Canada will join us. Sessions in Single Rope, Team Dance, Double Dutch, and Chinese Wheel will be taught to all jumpers. Anyone six years of age and older is welcome (adults too!). Athletic shoes are required. Walk-ins are welcome.

Date: Saturday, March 7th

Location: Monarch High School Gymnasium, Louisville

Time: Registration 9:00-9:30am, workshop starts 9:30am, staff show at 2:30pm, workshop ends at 3:00pm

Cost: \$30.00 (admission and rope) or \$40.00 (admission, rope, and pre-ordered t-shirt)

Concessions and Jump rope merchandise will be available for sale at the workshop. Lunches can be purchased, or bring a sack lunch (please fill out the pre-order lunch request on the registration form).

T-shirts: Shirts are navy, short-sleeved, 100% cotton with a multi-colored design on the chest. Please pre-order a shirt if you want one. Extras may be available at the door, but we can't guarantee availability. Pre-ordered shirts are \$10.00. Include payment for shirt with registration checks. T-shirt orders must be received by March 1st. See design below.



REGISTRATION FORM
ONE FORM PER PARTICIPANT
 (Please print clearly)

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Age: _____
 Team/School: _____

General admission and rope = \$30.00 (required)
 General admission/rope + optional t-shirt = \$40.00
 Circle size below and pay by March 1st to order t-shirt.
 Subway lunch - \$5. Sandwich, chips and water.
 _____ veggie _____ turkey _____ ham

Please circle T-shirt sizes: Youth Medium, Youth Large, Adult Small, Adult Medium, Adult Large, AXL, AXXL

Please mail completed forms and checks ASAP. If you order a t-shirt, please be sure checks are received by March 1 to guarantee that we will have a shirt for you.

Make all checks payable to: **BVSD SKIP-ITS**

Mail completed registration to: **SKIP-ITS, 909 St. Andrews, Louisville, CO 80027**

PARTICIPANT RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

This must be signed by a parent or legal guardian if participant is under 18 years of age.

We (or I) hereby request that you accept for registration in the 2009 Spring Fling Workshop

 (participant's name)

and in consideration of your acceptance of the application, we (or I) hereby release the "Skip-Its", the Boulder Valley School District, all persons associated with the Spring Fling Workshop for 2009 of and from all claims or causes of action arising from injury to the participant resulting from participation in the 2009 Workshop, whether such injury is the result of negligence or some other cause. If medical attention is required for injury or illness while at the Spring Fling Workshop, I give my permission for such medical care and I will be financially responsible. We (or I) also give permission for the "Skip-It Team" and/or Boulder Valley Schools to use any film, videos, and photographs of the participant for publicity, advertising, or other commercial purposes. I have read and understand the participant release and indemnity agreement and hereby agree to its' stipulations.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

(Parent or legal guardian signature if participant is under 18 years of age)

For questions, contact Cathy Douglas, (303) 926-5588, bcjdoug7@aol.com or Rich Cendali, (303) 817-2941

Kids Yoga at Mesa

This 3-week series for K-2nd graders is a playful introduction to yoga. Through flowing sequences, balancing poses, breathing exercises, and creative relaxation techniques, we encourage a deeper sense of body awareness, self-exploration, and interpersonal skills. Partner poses and cooperative yoga games inspire positive peer interactions that the students are sure to carry into their everyday lives. Children are guaranteed to learn and have tons of fun.

Debbie Huttner is a trained yoga teacher with years of experience. She loves teaching yoga to children: watching them learn, grow, and strengthen their bodies with their yoga practice.

- What:** Kids Yoga
- Who:** K-2nd graders
- When:** Mondays and Wednesdays, March 2nd -18th, 3:00-4:00pm
- Where:** Mesa Gym
- Cost:** \$40.00



School Attendance: A Key to Success

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be emphasized too strongly. Studies indicate that frequent absences from school are a primary cause for academic failure. When a student is absent for an extended period of time, they miss much more than just assignments; they miss the teacher's explanation, class discussion, experiments, demonstrations, and opportunities to ask questions. In short, the student misses the chance to receive as full an education as can be provided.

Mesa faculty and staff expect every student to be in attendance and on time each day. In the event that a student will be absent or tardy to school, the parent/guardian must notify the school office **before 9:00am on the morning of the absence**. The Mesa Office number is (303) 494-4704.

- **Illnesses**
In order to keep everyone healthy, students should be **free from fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to**

Please make checks payable to Mesa Elementary.
(Please print clearly)

STUDENT NAME _____
GRADE _____

RESPONSIBLE PARTY'S INFORMATION:
First/Last Name _____
Relationship _____
Address _____
City/Zip _____
Home Phone _____
Cell# _____
Email address (for program notifications): _____

PERMISSION: My child has my permission to participate in this after school program at Mesa. It is my responsibility to notify the program about any medical conditions my child has prior to involvement.

EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION: The following person(s) (must be 18 years old or older) has my permission to sign out the above-named student and should be contacted in an emergency when I cannot be reached:

Name _____
Phone #s _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

school. If a student becomes ill at school, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and get the student home to rest and recuperate.

- **Tardiness**
A student who arrives at school after attendance has been taken is required to sign in at the office and get a late pass to give to the teacher.
- **Early Check-Out/Dismissals**
In the event that a dental, medical, or other appointment must be made during the school day, the parent/guardian should report to the Mesa Office to sign out the student.

Regular school attendance ensures that the student comes to school prepared and ready to take part in a positive, successful educational program. By stressing the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality, parents/guardians help their student establish a work ethic that will serve them well in the future.

PTO Corner

The PTO is very busy with mid/end of year activities. And believe it or not, we have already begun our planning for the 2009-2010 school year!

We would like to extend a very big thank you to Lisa Gillespie for coordinating meals for the parent/teacher conferences. The staff really enjoyed having home-cooked food for dinner! Please read Lisa's thank you note and recognition of the volunteers at the end of this update. Thank you!

PTO Budget

Box Tops for Education: Thanks to everyone who saved those Box Tops for Education off their food labels. As a result, Mesa received a check from General Mills for \$433! Please keep donating your labels. The box to donate labels is located near the office.

Direct Donations: Thank you so much to the Mesa community for your support during the fall direct donation campaign. Because of your support, we have been able to fund all of our budgeted programs, as well as some additional items. If you did not contribute in the Fall, we hope you will still consider donating as there are always funding needs. The suggested donation is \$100 per child. If you have any questions about a donation, please contact Renae Foxhoven (renae@foxbach.com).

Upcoming Events

Science Fair: Your child is invited to be a scientist and participate in Mesa's annual science fair, to be held on April 16th and 17th. The goal of the science fair is to provide our students with an opportunity to develop a project using scientific method and to

share the knowledge they gain with their school community. This is a non-competitive event: the prize is learning from the joys, and perhaps frustrations, of "doing science." Please stop by the Mesa Morning Table to pick up a proposal form. Proposal forms are due by Friday, February 27th. If you have any questions about the science fair, please contact the Science Fair Chairs, Julie Gelderloos (gelderloosmw@msn.com) or Clare Stocker (cstocker@du.edu).

Mesa T-Shirts and Sweatshirts:

Spring is right around the corner! A Mesa t-shirt (\$12) or sweat shirt (\$23) is a great addition to the Spring wardrobe! They come in pink, slate blue, and moss green and are available at the Mesa Morning Table.

Spring Sports and Activities: Is your son or daughter interested in playing baseball, softball, or lacrosse this spring? Information is available at the Mesa Morning Table for the following activities: South Boulder Little League, Boulder Valley Girls Softball Association, YMCA/Boulder Valley Lacrosse (boys and girls), and Parlando School of Music. If you have a spring activity for which you would like to supply information, please contact Renae Foxhoven or Jennifer O'Brien (PTO Co-Presidents). We would be happy to put out fliers and registration forms for other activities as well.

Thank-You (from Lisa Gillespie)

Teacher Conference Meal

Thanks: On behalf of a very grateful staff, I'd like to acknowledge the volunteers who supplied delicious home-cooked dinners for 2009 Spring Conferences. An added bonus: the

leftovers from several nights provided lovely luncheon options for staff on subsequent days.

Besides our virtual committee (who helped decide meal themes), a big thanks goes out to the individuals who supplied everything from entrées, salads, soups, sandwiches, desserts, tapas, breads, chips, and other accompaniments, to soup bowls, for this round of meals:

Laura Baer, Christy Barth, Gina Basso, Terri Cook, Quincee Cotton, Polly Dawkins, Heather Dorn, Christy Earles, Pat Felt, Diana Fields, Lisa Gillespie, Tasha Given, Debbie Gould, Stephanie Griffin, Shelly Hartman, Nance Helmig, Julia Hoilien, Gina Kelman, Susan Leonard, Asnat Macoosh, Tabitha Manresa, Mary Maxwell, Trish McCarthy, Catie McDowell, Vicki McPherson, Dawn McSavaney, Susan McVicker, Erin Moran, Tara Newman, Liz Payton, Sandy Ramsey, Eve Rose, Christine Rubin, Anita Schumann, Betsy Shehigian, Michelle Smith, Clare Stocker, Stephanie Swope, Cathy Tallerico, and Tammi Wilmarth.

Many of our fine cooks volunteered for more than one meal. Thanks again to our incredible, caring Mesa volunteers!

~ Lisa Gillespie, Meal Coordinator
(Avery, 2-P)

Next Meeting: Come join us on **Tuesday, March 3rd**, at 6:15pm in the Library, for our next meeting! We will be discussing the events remaining in the school year as well as initiating our budget discussions for the 2009-2010 school year. Pizza and child care provided (\$4 per child). We are all members of the Mesa PTO, and we need your help in executing our remaining events and planning for the new school year!



1575 Lehigh Street
Boulder, CO 80305

Phone:
(303) 494-4704

Fax:
(303) 494-5908

Thriving During the Elementary Years: Identifying Learning Problems Early

We all learn differently, and we all have strengths and weaknesses in terms of our learning processes. There are also many different explanations for why students do not achieve at a level that is expected. For some students it's about motivation. (In last month's column we discussed using behavioral contracts to increase children's motivation to complete tasks at home and in school.) For other students it can also be a function of difficulties with speech, language processing, auditory and visual processing, written expression, emotional/behavioral factors, as well as overall intelligence.

The earlier that these learning challenges are identified, the sooner children can receive help to improve and/or

compensate for these difficulties. When early identification does not occur, these problems tend to get worse as does the child's attitude towards school. In some cases, these challenges are identified in preschool and, through proper remediation, addressed. In many cases these challenges become more apparent in elementary school. For the child's academic success as well as positive sense of self, it is important to identify and attempt to remediate these difficulties as early as possible. Children spend most of their waking hours in school and if they experience a high degree of failure, the damage to their self-esteem can be significant. This is why early intervention is key.

If you suspect that your child is having difficulties in school, the right place to start is with their classroom teacher. Request an opportunity to meet with the teacher and discuss your concerns and get their feedback as well. In addition, the teacher may recommend additional services within the school. In some cases additional evaluations by school specialists may be necessary. Through the use of psychological, academic, speech/language and learning processing



testing, it is possible to get a more detailed and clear picture of a child's strengths and weakness relative to other children of the same age. Depending on the severity of the areas of weakness, additional services at the school may be available.

~ Dr. Jan Hittelman

Dr. Jan Hittelman is a licensed psychologist and Director of Boulder Psychological Services, LLC.

What's your opinion? Questions or comments for this column can be sent to: 1527 Pine Street, Suite B, Boulder, CO 80302, via email to: jan.hittelman@gmail.com or by phone: (720) 217-3270.

Get additional information by visiting: www.BoulderPsychologicalServices.com



We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://bvsd.org/schools/mesa>