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The Mesa Messenger

October 2009

Special Interest Articles:

- Message from the Principal
- New Curriculum, Report Cards, and Learning in BVSD Community Conversations
- Letter to Parents: El Salvador Eye Campaign
- Thriving During the Elementary Years: Importance of Early Intervention

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Message from the Principal

Dear Mesa Families:

I'll keep my information this month to just two major items of impact for Mesa Elementary.

Mesa Bond Construction

At the time of this newsletter, the Mesa Design Advisory Team has completed the third of five meetings with the RTA architects to select a scheme and plan for the Mesa facility improvements included in the Boulder Valley School District Bond program. As previously communicated, the timeline for construction at Mesa is scheduled to run from June 2010 through July 2011. Much of the information I have available at this point is available on the Boulder Valley website (see the link below). I strongly encourage parents to visit the page, read the minutes, and email me with any questions and concerns. There is much we don't know yet, but I certainly want parents to have access to as much information as we have available.

Link for Mesa Bond Project Information:

<http://bvsd.org/bondproject/schools/Pages/mesa.aspx>

Mesa School Improvement Plan

As we do each year, the Mesa teachers work in collaboration with our School Improvement Team (teachers and volunteer parents) to develop goals for the school in three areas:
1) Academic achievement,

- 2) Equity of achievement,
- 3) School climate.

It was interesting to write our plan this year, given that last spring's achievement data for Mesa equaled or surpassed any previous highs in achievement at Mesa. However, we are a high-achieving school with a strong drive to improve.

Our focus for academic achievement is to improve upon our recent improvements in writing performance by Mesa students. Our equity goal is to improve upon the performance of our students identified with special needs. At the same time, we aim to address the current achievement gap in the performance of boys in writing versus girls (Boys typically perform lower on the whole in writing. We have no other gaps in any other area.). We expect to improve the scores of boys while maintaining or gaining on the scores for girls. Finally, our implementation of Positive Behavior Support (Respect, Responsibility, Safety, and Kindness) to improve overall student climate at Mesa is our climate goal.

I encourage you to peruse the School Improvement Plan document located on the Mesa website.

<http://bvsd.org/schools/mesa/Documents/Mesa%2009-10%20School%20Improvement%20Plan.pdf>

Go Mustangs!
Josh

New Curriculum, Report Cards, and Learning in BVSD Community Conversations

October 7, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is my pleasure to inform you of an exciting change occurring in Boulder Valley School District. Our district has three key strategies for promoting equity and excellence in BVSD. One of these strategies is ensuring a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Our curriculum, the content taught to our students in Kindergarten through 12th grade, describes what students should know and be able to do. The curriculum is guaranteed when all students across the district are receiving instruction in specific courses and at specific grade levels according to content that has been agreed upon by teachers as being essential. The curriculum is viable when the content agreed upon as essential is manageable for a student to learn within a school year. Throughout last year, teachers and administrators from schools across the district met to revise our curriculum. The group's intent was threefold: to ensure that

the curriculum met or surpassed state and national standards, to provide clear guidance to teachers about what content should be addressed in specific courses and at specific grade levels, and to ensure that the curriculum was viable and could be taught in a year's time.

During the coming year our schools will be implementing this new revised curriculum which will guarantee that all students receive instruction in the essential content every year of their educational experience in Boulder Valley School District.

Elementary report cards have been adjusted to reflect this revised curriculum. During this transition school year, students may not receive a grade in every row and column of the report card. In keeping with our efforts to minimize paper, we will not be sending accompanying documents home with the report cards describing the curriculum. Instead, the complete curriculum essentials documents may be accessed at <http://bvsd.org/CURRICULUM/CURRICULUM/Pages/default.aspx>. There will also be hard

copies of the revised curriculum available at each school site for parents or community members to check out.

As partners in the education of your child, I want to invite you to one of several meetings scheduled about **Learning in BVSD** to discuss the new curriculum, report cards or anything else. Dates and locations for these meetings will be on the BVSD website. I look forward to hearing from you at one or more of these events. Please visit the **Learning in BVSD** webpage, <http://bvsd.org/learning/Pages/default.aspx>, for updates on curriculum, instruction, assessment, stories from the field, future meetings and Frequently Asked Questions.

With warm regards,

Ellen Miller-Brown, Ph.D.
Chief Academic Officer
6500 Arapahoe Avenue
P.O. Box 9011
Boulder, CO 80301
(720) 561-5913

Learning in BVSD

Dear Families,

As partners in the education of your child, we want to invite you to one of several meetings listed below about **Learning in BVSD** to discuss where we're headed with the new curriculum, instruction, assessment, report cards, and other issues of relevance to learning. We look forward to hearing from

you at one or more of these events.

Agenda for the Evenings:

- Future Expectations for our Students: Why are we teaching and learning in this way in BVSD? (A short video will be shown)
- What is the BVSD plan? (The BVSD Instructional Framework)
- What are key terms we all need to know?
- What are the beliefs about

curriculum, assessment, and instruction that are the basis of our work?

- What basically is the new curriculum and how does it impact what we'll see on report cards?
- Audience questions and issues

Meeting Dates:

October 19 - Broomfield High School/Library
October 29 - Monarch High School/Library

November 2 – Fairview High School/Library
November 12 - Centaurus High School/Library
November 16 - Boulder High School/Library

All Meeting Times:

6:30 - 8:00pm

Please visit our website at: <http://bvsd.org/learning/Pages/default.aspx>

Library News

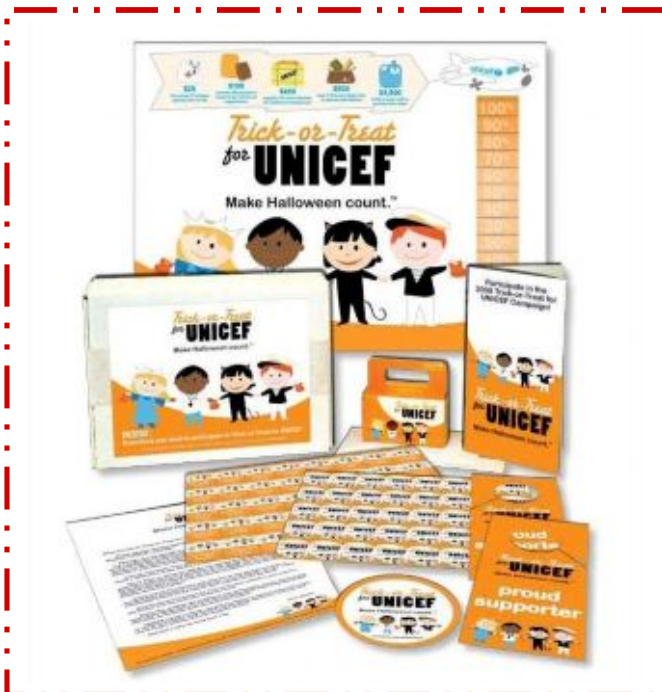
Book Fair

We really want to take a moment to say **Thank You** to parents and students who made those generous donations to the library during the Scholastic Book Fair. We got some wonderful new books that will be enjoyed by so many readers for years to come. And every purchase was a bit of a donation, because the library benefits from a portion of the total sales. We are then able to purchase more new books to enjoy. **So, Mesa Community, Thank You Very Much!**

Trick or Treat for UNICEF

Halloween is rapidly approaching, which means that we have another opportunity to participate in Trick or Treat for UNICEF. This is completely optional, but it's an opportunity to help many thousands of children all around the world who are in great need.

Each classroom will have a box for donations that students can add to. Students who want to take a box of their own and collect during any Trick or Treating on Halloween can have a box of their own as well. All of those collections will be taken to the classroom and gathered together during the week after Halloween. The money will then be totaled by classrooms and brought to the library where we will total the donations and send it to UNICEF. Participating in this kind of activity can have a long lasting impact around the world.



TumbleBooks

I want to remind Mesa families and inform new families of the availability of the "Tumble Books" for a variety of books that are read aloud online. The collection is steadily expanding, and the books are very well read. While the greatest volume is picture books (click "Story Books"), there are even classics such as Aesop's Fables (click "Audio Books") and some activities. To access these books, go to the Mesa Library web page and look for the icon near the top of the page on the right.

Parent Books

We would like to let parents new to Mesa know (and remind all Mesa Parents) about our collection of books related to parenting skills. Parents can get a Mesa library card to check out these books. There are applications for cards on the top of the bookshelf just to the right as you are entering the library.

Book Mark Contest

The library will again have a bookmark contest for all interested students. Students can design a bookmark, and a winner will be decided in voting that will take place right after Thanksgiving break. We will be **handing out the entry forms the week of November 2nd**. The designs will need to fit in the space provided and be done in black ink. **All bookmark entries will need to be turned in by Friday, November 20th**.

Colorado Children's Book Awards

We have begun looking at the books that were nominated for the 2010 Colorado Children's Book Award. There are ten picture books and ten chapter books that are nominees. In order to be able to vote, a child needs to have read or listened to someone read at least three of the books. They will hear many or all of the picture books, but there will not be time to read the chapter books. The chapter books are being "introduced" and students may want to read some of those before the **voting occurs in February**. If so, they will need to find those books at a bookstore or the public library, as they are not available for check out at Mesa (they are being kept to share with classes in the library). If you would like a list of the nominees, you can visit the Mesa Library website (under "Programs" on the Mesa page). Scroll down to announcements and click on the heading "Colorado Children's Book Award Nominees" to see the complete list.

~ Stan Converse, Teacher Librarian

Counseling Center

The first few months of school have been very eventful in a positive way. I have been in all the classrooms conducting social skill building activities throughout the week. The main topics have been: Getting to know yourself – your strengths and difficulties; Empathy – what it means, what role does it play in friendships; and Trust – how trust is the foundation in friendships. I will continue to discuss friendships using the 4 Mesa Values, and the students are really beginning to see how these values support the Mesa student community.

Topic: Academic Motivation: Strategies for Parents (Excerpt from NASP Communiqué September 2009)

From the time they are born, children are naturally motivated to learn. The early signs are seen in their development, when they struggle to reach for a toy, learning to walk, or eat without help. As they approach school age, other factors can come into play and can interfere with that natural motivation to learn. Children can develop negative beliefs about learning. They can become easily frustrated and feel that their efforts are not worth it. They might try hard but don't see the results they want to see. There's unnecessary competition or expectations by adults in their lives, whether at home, school, or community. Sometimes children may think that luck or circumstance influences their success in school more than hard work. There are a number of reasons that can influence academic motivation.

There are ways to increase motivation. Positive parent-child relationship is a key component. Letting your child know that you think school is important and providing recognition for their effort and success can motivate learning. Teaching effective study skills and habits will also be helpful. And working in collaboration with their teachers will be integral.

- **Encourage positive family relationships and responsibility** – provide reasonable structure and expectations around chores and proper behavior. Take time to do fun things with your child individually and as a family. Have regular ongoing conversations with your child and provide time to listen to his/her interests and concerns. Praise your child for the effort as well as success.
- **Model the importance of learning** – plan family activities that encourage learning such as libraries, museum visits, and parks. Talk to your child about your interests and likes. Let your child see you read books, newspapers and magazines. Talk to him/her about what you read. Show an interest in his/her learning, and talk about career interests and how learning/school relates to that career.
- **Teach habits that encourage learning** – set a routine for homework and a designated spot that allows for quiet studying. Limit things that interfere with homework. Help your child become an expert in something that interests him/her and encourage him/her to read/write about it. Encourage your child to try new activities.
- **Work with your child's teacher** – show your child that you respect his/her teacher. Resolve conflicts privately. Talk regularly with his/her teacher.

These suggestions will give you a place to start and hope around your child's interest in learning. If you feel that there are other significant factors coming into play around your child's motivation to learn, I am always happy to talk with you.

All the best,

Debbie Price
Mesa School Psychologist

Happenings

November 1st

All School Assembly, 8:45am

November 4th

Picture Retake Day

November 6th

1st Trimester Ends

November 10th

Fairview Musical Matinee (4th and 5th grades), 9:30am

November 11th

No School for Students

November 13th

Report Cards Go Home

November 18th

Musical Auditions (5-C), 3:00pm

November 19th

Musical Auditions (5-K), 3:00pm

November 23rd – 27th

No School, Thanksgiving Break

Visit the Mesa Calendar online at: <http://bvsd.org/schools/mesa/calendar/Pages/default.aspx>

Music Notes

The profits from the 2009-2010 M&M's and Bell Choir photographs were \$525. Dr. Roger Forman, alias photobrain, began his Mesa photo project when his first child was in 4th grade at Mesa, and now his children are both in college! His contribution total is now



approaching \$5,000, and the photographs along the music hallway are a wonderful archive for our school! Thank you to Dr. Forman for his donation and dedication to the music department!

~ Sarah Knoebel

PE Class News

Magnificent Mile Runs

I want to thank everyone involved in the Magnificent Mile Runs that took place at Fairview High School. They would not have been successful without great parent support, teacher support, and our wonderful 1st - 5th grade runners. The kids did an amazing job, and I am very proud of them! Thanks again to all involved with this wonderful event.



Yoga at Mesa

Some of you may be wondering about the after school Yoga program that will be offered at Mesa. Fall and Spring programs will be offered. Both programs take place on Mondays and Wednesdays after school from 3:00 - 4:00pm and cost \$30 per program. Each program runs for 6 weeks. The **Fall** program will be for 3rd - 5th graders, and the **Spring** program is for K - 2nd graders. Look for information coming soon at the PTO Morning Table. Flyers will be available sometime in November. Questions? jacy.bruno@bvsd.org

Fall Program Dates: November 30; December 2, 7, 9, 14, and 16

Spring Program Dates: March 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, and 17

~ Jacy Bruno

Lost Something?

If you think you may have misplaced an item, please check with your student's teacher first – they may still have it!

If it has been several days since the item was lost, check the school **Lost & Found**, located past the Library in the cubby on the right.

We suggest that you immediately check with your student's teacher AND in Lost & Found if the missing item is of high value. If you FIND property on school grounds, contact the Mesa Office regarding where to bring the found item.



Mesa will discard/donate unclaimed items to charitable organizations on **October 31st**. Please don't let this happen to your property! **Check out Lost & Found before the 31st**.

Stopping Germs at Home, Work, and School

How Germs Spread

The main way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This is called "droplet spread" and can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air and are deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes germs also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth, or nose before washing their hands. We know that some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks.

How to Stop the Spread of Germs

In a nutshell, take care to:

- Cover your mouth and nose.
- Clean your hands often.
- Remind children to practice healthy habits, too.

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue.

Does the "Happy Birthday" song help keep your hands clean? Not exactly. Yet we recommend that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. That's about the same time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice!

Alcohol-based hand wipes and gel sanitizers work, too. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

Germs and Children

Remind children to practice healthy habits: germs can rapidly spread, especially at school.

The flu has caused high rates of absenteeism among students and staff in our country's 119,000 schools. Influenza is not the only respiratory infection of concern in schools -- nearly 22 million school days are lost each year to the common cold alone. However, when children practice healthy habits, they miss fewer days of school.



Source: *Am J Infect Control* 2000;28:340-6.

More Facts, Figures, and How-To's

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a great deal of information about hand washing and other things you can do to stop the germs that cause flu, the common cold, and other illnesses. See <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/resources.htm>

~ Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Open Enrollment (OE) Open Houses

Open Houses offer an opportunity to meet Mesa staff, learn about our programs, enjoy a school tour, and get questions answered in a friendly, convenient environment. They are FREE and available to any parent interested in **open enrolling** their student(s) at Mesa.

Two OE Open Houses are offered: Wednesday, December 9th, 9:00 - 10:45am, and Monday, December 14th, 9:00 - 10:45am. To reserve a spot, please email your name, phone number, and choice of date to Kendra at kendra.wilczewski@bvsd.org.

Annual Share-A-Coat Drive

It is time once again for the Rotary Club Share-A-Coat Drive!

In 2008, over 3,500 coats and many miscellaneous items of clothing were collected and distributed to needy families in Boulder County and to various charitable organizations.

This year, in addition to



coats and other items of clothing, we plan to collect children's used story books and other books that can be recycled back through schools and other organizations.

We will have collection boxes available at Mesa with pick-up dates of November 5th, November 19th, and December 3rd. Once coats are picked up, they will be cleaned and distributed to the needy, with a final distribution on December 19th in conjunction with the Share-A-Gift Program.

We have heard from many of you that instead of receiving cash prizes as in past years it would be

better for the Boulder Valley Rotary Club to make a cash donation in the names of the participating schools to a local charity, such as the Boulder Homeless Shelter or Emergency Family Assistance. We will solicit preferences regarding the local charity chosen in the near future, so please give this idea some thought.

We still plan to recognize schools that collect the highest number of coats per student. We plan to recognize the first, second, and third place schools in three categories: 1) more than 500 students, 2) 350 to 500 students, and 3) less than 350 students. In

addition, there will be recognition for the school collecting the most coats regardless of size. Schools will be recognized at one of our weekly January Rotary Club meetings.

Thanks to the efforts of all concerned, the program has been very successful in the past and has provided warm clothing to many less fortunate men, women, and children. On behalf of the entire Rotary Club, I wish to express our gratitude for your continued support and participation in the program.

~ Bob Harberg
Boulder Valley Rotary Club
(303) 441-3124
harbergb@bouldercolorado.gov

Share-A-Gift Program

Every year after Thanksgiving break, Share-a-Gift places collection boxes in schools for our annual holiday toy drive. Toys are distributed to children in need within the BVSD attendance area. Given the current economic situation, we anticipate the need will be greater than ever.



Our collection dates will be Monday, November 30th, through Wednesday, December 16th.

Thanks for your continuing support for this worthwhile program.

~ Cathy Conery
Co-Chair Share-a-Gift

Eco-Cycle B-earthday Parties

Eco-Cycle B-earthday parties combine fun activities with green values. Choose from these exciting themes:

- **Eco-Art:** *Recreate, Reinvent, Recycle*
- **Green Thumbs Garden Party:** *Buds, Bugs, Bees and More*

- **Creative Papermaking:** *Make Paper with Pizzazz*
- **Green Teams:** *Ultimate Planet Challenge*
- **Jungle Jam:** *Frogs, Toucans and Monkeys, Oh my!*

For more information, call Kate at Eco-cycle, (303) 444-6634, ext. 103.



Creating Waste-Free Lunches

Dear Students and Families,

Your school did an impressive job last year as one of Eco-Cycle's first Green Star Schools. The amount of trash the school sent to the landfill was reduced by more than half through recycling and composting! This couldn't have been accomplished without the support and participation of the entire school community. As a new school year begins, we look forward to working with you to continue and even surpass last year's success!

Now that your school has implemented school-wide composting, the next step is to tackle the trash that is still leftover: those snack wrappers, juice pouches, pudding cups, and other disposables that can't



be recycled, composted, or reused. It may sound tricky, but here are some simple tips for creating a lunch that is waste free:

- use a reusable lunch bag or box
- pack food in reusable containers
- bring drinks in refillable or recyclable containers
- save and reuse plastic bags
- create cloth napkins from old clothes
- provide reusable forks and spoons (cheap stainless-steel utensils are available at thrift shops)

Even doing one or two things from the list above will make a big difference. By the way, did you know that waste-free lunches are good for your wallet as well as the environment? A recent study reveals that packing lunches in reusable containers instead of using disposable, individually packaged items can save \$240 over the course of the school year.

By being part of a Green Star School, you are helping to set a new precedent for taking care of our community and the Earth. Your school will serve as a model to others throughout the nation as it moves toward Zero Waste.

~ *Eco-Cycle's School Recycling and Environmental Education Program*

Free Parent Education

Welcome to the 3rd year of offering these informative and dynamic panels of professionals sharing their expertise to help parents improve children's health so they can learn and grow. Panels are for any parent or educator who wants to learn more about how to support kids' bodies and minds. Past participants have left with ideas, tips, resources, and possibilities.

Thursday, January 7th: *Cultivating Lively Minds*

Dr. Zack Alme, D.C., Wellness Coach
Joanne Neiman, M.A., L.P.C., Psychotherapy -
Brainspotting
Judy Converse, MPH, LD, RD, author of *Special Needs Kids Eat Right*
Linda Cain, MSED, Educational & Therapeutic
Consultant

Monday, March 15th: *Supporting Strong Organization*

Dr. Liz Turner, D.C., Family Chiropractic
Mary Collette Rogers, Kitchen Coach
Kristin B. Powell, Ph.D., PLLC, Clinical Psychology and



Neuropsychology
Deborah Kratovil, Learning Pathways

Panels are held at the BVSD Education Center, 6500 E Arapahoe Road, Boulder, 6:00 - 8:00pm. Registration is not required! Please contact Anna at (720) 561-5918 for more information.

~ Anna Stewart
BVSD Parent Liaison
Parent Support Center
(720) 561-5918
anna.stewart@bvsd.org

PTO Corner

Happy fall from the PTO! Thank you so much for supporting our fall events! Because of your support, we were able to hold a couple of very successful events. Our Fall Fest raised \$3,900, \$400 over our budgeted amount. Income from the Scholastic Book Fair and Payback Books will be reported in the next newsletter.

We also recently completed the annual teacher mini-grant application process. There were several great applications this year, and the PTO Mini-Grant Committee awarded 15 mini-grants totaling \$4,165. There was at least one mini-grant awarded at each grade level as well as grants awarded to specialists, too. It looks like the Mesa students will benefit this year in many ways because of these grants, including special guest speakers in several grades, new ways of learning number sense using abaci, and special writer's workshop funding in several classes. Thank you to those who sat on the Mini-Grant Committee: Linda Garby (Chair), Debbie Penz, Sarah Heilbronner, Aneka Finley, Jennifer O'Brien, and Christy Earles.

Because of your support, we would like to give back to Mesa's parents. In the coming months, we will be offering opportunities for parents to participate in and attend local community events. These are not meant to be fundraising events but a way to reach out to the Boulder community while providing ways for families to get together and have some fun. Please see information about an upcoming CU Buffs football game below!

Upcoming Events

CU Buffaloes Football Game: Come support the CU Buffaloes as they take on Texas A&M on Saturday, November 7th (Time TBA). We have a block of tickets reserved for Mesa students and their families. Tickets are only \$15 each. To purchase tickets, please refer to the flyer at

<http://bvsd.org/schools/mesa/PTO/Documents/CU%20Football%20Ticket%20Flyer.jpg>

(press function key F11 to view full-screen). We hope to see many of you there!

Impact On Education: Impact on Education Award Nominations are now being accepted. The deadline for submitting a nomination is November 2nd, which is earlier than in past years. The Awards ceremony will take place February 11, 2010. This is 2 months earlier than years past. For more information about the Impact Awards, visit

http://www.impactoneducation.org/site/file/program_impact_application.html. We encourage you to nominate

someone from our wonderful Mesa staff! If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Gould (dwgould4@comcast.net).

Thank You!

Parent/Teacher Conference Meals: Please see page 13 for a very big THANKS to all of the folks who brought meals and/or supplies for the dinners.

International Walk to School Day: A special thank you to Christy Barth and the following volunteers for making International Walk-to-School Day such a success: Clare Stocker, Nan Rosenbloom, Steve Gimpel, Simone Tilmes, Bahman Salas, Chesley McColl, Tammy Livingstone, Regina Kershner, Richele Mein, Andrea Runkel, Cassy Mathews, Kristina Robinson, Ning Mosberger, Sara Knoebel, and Rico Kellogg.

Fall Fest: Thank you for a record-breaking Fall Fest! The kids had a blast and we couldn't have done it without the collective efforts of all of our Mesa parents. We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the class parents for the coordination of booths, and especially the Fall Fest Committee: Renae Foxhoven, Sally Hoehstetter, Gina Kelman, Cece Bloomfield, Karen Nielsen, Eve Rose, and Tammi Willmarth. And we would especially like to say thank you to all of the Mesa students who were so generous and participated in the "Tokens for Dog Biscuits" program at Fall Fest. Students had a choice of getting prizes or dog biscuits to donate to the Boulder Humane Society with the tokens they had won at Fall Fest. Mesa students donated over 100 Iams dog biscuits to The Boulder Humane Society. Way to go Mesa students!

Bake Sales: Thank you to Tammi Willmarth for working with the Mesa bakers to provide so many goodies and treats for the Fall Fest! And a huge thank you to all of



PTO Corner << From Page 9

the bakers! We had 75 cakes for the Cake Walk – what a success! We were able to keep the Cake Walk going until the end of the night thanks to everyone who baked cakes! The bake sale was also a huge success: we sold 100% of all baked items well before the night was over, and the treats were delicious! Thanks again!

Payback Books: Thank you so much to Julie Okada for coordinating our Payback Books this year. It is a big effort, and we appreciate the time she put into making it a success. Thank you!

Mesa T-Shirts and Sweatshirts: Thank you to Helen Devereux and Eun Cho for again coordinating our Mesa t-shirts and sweatshirts! As usual, the design and colors were fantastic, and we appreciate the time they spent over the summer to get them ready to be put on display during the assessment days.

Scholastic Book Fair: We would like to extend a big thank you to Jill Pierce for executing another excellent book fair! The children loved looking at the selection, and parents had a great opportunity to browse and purchase books before and after school, during conferences, and at the special Muffins for Moms and Donuts for Dads events. A special thank you also goes out to Dolores Young, Christy Earles, Tammi Willmarth, and Betsy Shehigian.

Other Items

Mesa Morning Table: We always love people stopping by to see us at the Morning Table – it is great to get to know the parents of the Mesa community! If you are interested in checking out the latest plans for Mesa for the Bond program, Jennifer O'Brien (PTO President) has left a copy of the Design Advisory Team binder for

parents to look through. In it, you can find information on the scope and budget of the bond program for Mesa, preliminary designs, meeting minutes, etc. We are also carrying information about winter YMCA sports, information on purchasing tickets for the upcoming CU football game on November 7th, and the 19th Annual Boulder Nordic Club Expo and Ski Swap on November 4th. Come check it out!

King Soopers Gift Cards: King Soopers Gift Cards are available at the Mesa Morning Table. We have forms to register for monthly distribution as well as individual cards for purchase.

PTO Meeting Minutes: Did you miss the September PTO meeting and want to know what was discussed? PTO meeting minutes are posted on the Mesa website. You can access them via the following link: <http://bvsvd.org/schools/mesa/PTO/Documents/PTO%20Minutes%20September%208,%202009.pdf>

Mesa Parking Space: Congratulations to Christy Earles for winning the Mesa reserved parking space for the rest of October and the month of November! Each month, the PTO conducts a drawing of all volunteers, class parents, and PTO officers to award the use of the reserved space in the Mesa parking lot. Volunteer at Mesa today and earn a chance to park in the reserved space!

Next Meeting

Come join us on Tuesday, November 10th, at 6:15pm in the Library for our next meeting! Pizza and child care provided (\$5 per child). Steve Schumacher and Doug Abernathy will be presenting the proposed design for Mesa. Come join us to hear more about it!

Letter to Parents: El Salvador Eye Campaign

My name is Ted Connolly, a Mesa parent. Last year, I spoke at a Mesa school assembly regarding the El Salvador Eye Clinic and asked for gently used items (toys, sunglasses, etc.). First, I want to thank you for the gracious donations you provided, specifically the children's sunglasses. We had a group from an orphanage come through, and they enjoyed picking out a pair of much needed sunglasses.

To refresh your memory, the purpose of the Eye Clinic is to provide eye care for over 2000 rural El Salvadorans. Additionally, the Eye Clinic collects children's sunglasses

with UV protection and gently used toys and stuffed animals for the children who visit the Clinic.

Beginning November 16th, we will have collection boxes in each of the classrooms for these items. If you have an interest in donating, please have your child bring the item to their classroom by November 20th.

Finally, I want to thank the school, specifically Ms. Swearingen and Mr. Baldner, for supporting this initiative.

~ Ted Connolly, Mesa Parent (Eddie and Jimmie)

From the Garden...

In the Classroom

It's HARVEST TIME for the Mesa Garden to Table program. Volunteers have been busy working with classes on cooking and curriculum lessons. The 2nd graders prepared cabbage salad, zucchini muffins, and Swiss chard frittata with chefs from The Kitchen. They also graphed the performance of the solar array on Mesa's roof and will be testing a solar oven soon. The 1st graders harvested seeds from the garden to study for



science. Kindergarteners harvested pumpkins and examined their seeds. The 4th graders will be making foods from Colonial America, and 5th graders will be testing the soil in the garden and conducting a water activity in the spring. Mesa 3rd graders will use the garden resources to complement their study of nutrition in the spring as well.

In the Cafeteria

Mesa's students are eating produce from the garden on the full salad bar, thanks to the flexibility and enthusiasm of our new chef, Linda Foxhoven, and her boss Ann Cooper, the "renegade lunch lady." Garden to Table will soon have a sign in the cafeteria designating which salad bar item is fresh from the garden. Parents are welcome to come and have lunch with their child. The cost of the fresh salad bar is \$3.75, and you can charge it to your child's pre-paid lunch account. The menu has changed dramatically, with no more preservatives, refined sugar, HFCS, or white rice and flour. Whole grains and organic milk are now a part of the healthy mix being offered on the menu. Come taste the difference!

Friday in the Garden

Mesa G2T meets in the garden Friday afternoons from 2:30 - 3:30pm for weeding, socializing, and education. We'd like to send a big THANK YOU to our two parent experts who lent their skills to our Garden Talks. Buz Cotton, a master composter, provided wonderful materials and conversation about composting and how to turn our trash into valuable soil. He will lend his skills to the design of a new compost area for the garden. Maggie Janssen, a master gardener, provided information and guidance about weeds. We are never short of weeds in our school garden, so we appreciate her knowledge and

advice. Thank you to both parents for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with us.

The Future of the Garden

The garden may have to move during Mesa's remodel in 2010, but current plans suggest that it will most likely stay where it is. Regardless of the move, we have decided to install raised beds to address our weed problems. When we install the new beds, we are considering dedicating a bed to each class. Teachers will choose what to cultivate to facilitate curriculum tie-ins.

Fundraising

Plans for the garden and our cooking program require funding. Please join us for two fundraisers:

- **Black Cat Dinner**

The talented and award winning chef Eric Skokan of Black Cat Farm Table Bistro has graciously offered an exclusive dinner for the Mesa School community on Wednesday, December 2nd. There are seatings available at 6pm and 8pm in groups of 4-6. Enjoy dinner and wine while raising funds for the Garden to Table program at Mesa. \$50 per person, reservations are required. Look for details coming in Friday Folders. For more information about Black Cat, please visit: <http://www.blackcatboulder.com/>

- **Culinary School of the Rockies Private Holiday Cookie Class and Bake Sale**

Culinary School of the Rockies is offering a private holiday cookie baking class for Mesa parents on Wednesday, December 16th, from 9am until 1pm. The cost of the class is \$95 (a \$50 savings from the regular \$145). Participants will learn to cook: **Chewy Amaretti Cookie Sandwiches with Chocolate Ganache (Gluten Free)**, **Merry Meringue Christmas Cookies (Gluten Free)**, **Razz-Ma-Tazz Bars** (popular holiday cookies with raspberry and white chocolate), **Mud Puddles**, **Chocolate Glazed Toffee Bars**, and **Pecan Snowballs**. All cookies baked in the class will be available through a bake-sale, with proceeds benefitting our school garden and cooking program. Look for pre-order forms coming in Friday folders in the coming months. For more information on Culinary School of the Rockies, please visit: <http://www.culinaryschoolrockies.com/>

~ Tabitha Manresa and Cassy Matthews

For more information on the Mesa Garden, please visit: <http://bvsvd.org/schools/mesa/about/Pages/garden.aspx>

Acrostic Poetry

These acrostic poems were written by Mesa 2nd grade students following their cooking classes with chefs from The Kitchen. Enjoy!

Frittata is scrumptious
Really good to munch on
It took me three seconds to eat it
Tastes like morning breakfast
The chefs cooked for us
And helped me crack the eggs
Together we made a delicious dish to eat
All of the kids ate it.
By Fin G.



Fabulous frittata tastes delicious to me
Recipe shmecipes make up your own and you will see
It tastes mouthwatering
Tea would taste wonderful with it
Tingly-crack-snap-splash making frittata is a bing-bong-bash
At night I try to sneak some more
Today our class made a mess, but we cleaned up in a jiffy
A party should serve this.
By Nicholas S.

Frittata is tasty
Rice is not required in frittata
Ingredients are: eggs, onions, garlic, cheese, swiss chard and butter
Tasted like an egg omelet
Today our class made frittata
All of the students thought it was delicious
Tingly frittata is the best
All of the kids chomped it down ... yum.
By Piatt P.

First we cracked the eggs ... CRACK
Read the recipe
Ingredients are: eggs, onions, garlic, swiss chard, cheese, and butter
Taste amazing
Today I made a frittata
And got to eat
The frittata that we made
A fun time.
By Annabelle B.



Frying the frittata looks really, really, exciting
Ready to grate the cheese and peel the garlic
If you are using a knife, you have to be very careful not to cut yourself
Tasting was fun because I haven't ever eaten frittata
Touching it felt like dough
Ate it in one bite
Tasty but a little bitter
At the cafeteria is where we made the frittata.
By Jason D.G.

"Food," I said when the frittata came out of the kitchen
Rattling and cooking in that pan – out it came – "I want to eat now"
"Icky," said some people
Tiny sparks hit the pan when the chef lifted it up
Tastes like my dad's homemade eggs
At the cafeteria it smelled good
There was a lot of cheese
A great meal to have for breakfast.
By Ethan R.

Swiss chard is good for you
With a little spice on it, it is exciting
I like the spicy taste!
Shoot! The egg white
Splattered on me!



Chard makes me thirsty.
Hooray, the frittata is done.
A little bit more cheese ... please.
Recipe ingredients are: eggs, cheese, garlic, onion, swiss chard, and butter
"Delicious," I say!
By Zoe S.

Someday I will be cooking myself
When I see it, it looks sooooooo good
In the omelet was lots of cheese
Shoogk-splash-snap
Smells like a yummy omelet with spinach

Crunchy, yummy, crust sliding down my throat
Healthy swiss chard is great for you
A great meal to have
Recipe: eggs, cheese, garlic, onions, butter, and swiss chard
Delicious omelet.
By Henry H.

Read more acrostic poetry from Mesa's 2nd graders at <http://bvsvd.org/schools/mesa/about/Pages/garden.aspx>

Picture Retake Day

If you were unable to purchase pictures of your student or siblings on September 16th, you may do so on November 4th (Picture Retake Day). If you were not happy with the pictures

you received, your student may schedule a retake on the 4th. Retake order forms are available at the Mesa Morning Table or in the Mesa Office.

Teacher Conference Meals Thanks!

A very big THANKS to all of the folks who supplied entrees, sides, salads, desserts, etc., as well as compostable plates and bowls, for the **Teacher Conference Night dinners**. As always, the staff appreciated the generosity of the Mesa Community during those extremely long days. Many teachers expressed relief that they didn't have to deal with dinner arrangements in addition to all the prep required for the conferences themselves!

The following people brought meals and/or supplies for the dinners:

Julie Able-Hunt, Leslie Allen, Laura Baer, Gina Basso, Janet Beatty, Cece Bloomfield, Shawna Boylan, Terri Cook, Marcey Cote, Christy DeMeyer, Christy Earles, Jennifer Eisenlau, Vicki Edgington, Sue Erickson, Pat Felt, Gina Gazvoda, Carol Haggans, Amy Harpool, Anne Hedlund, Andrienne Lee, Susan Leonard, Tammy Livingstone, Kate Kupferer, Tabitha Manresa, Trish McCarthy, Chesley McColl, Cheryl McCutchen, Dawn McSavaney, Susan McVicker, Deborah Mensch, Billy Patton, Juli Pearce, Jill Pierce, Nancy Prince, Sophie Rose, Christine Rubin, Amy Shanahan, Betsy Shehigian, Allison Smits, Claire Stocker, Cathy Tallerico, Adrian VanNice, Tammi Willmarth, and Anne Zellers.

We also have many more members of our "virtual meal planning committee" who helped with suggestions and the selection of meal themes. I also want to acknowledge and thank our Mesa staff members for helping coordinate each meal's set-up and clean-up: Jacy Bruno, Sarah Knoebel, April Christenson, and Judy Bullert.

Thanks again, everyone! We really couldn't have done it without you!

~ Lisa M. Gillespie
Meal Coordinator and Avery's Mom (3-M)



Walk to School Day Recap

Walk to School Day was a fantastic success, with an overall school participation of 86% walkers, bikers, and bus riders. Everyone enjoyed fresh coffee from Café Sole and home baked treats from many parents! We have many people to thank: the Mesa M&M's for their wonderful voices; Mr. Baldner, Mrs. Bruno, and Mr. Kellogg for escorting the kids from Bear Creek Park; all the parents who made special plans that morning to participate with their child; David for having the tables, garbage cans, and all necessities ready for us in the morning; and Judy and Kendra for all the reminders and getting the information out to families. Thank-you!



Our Boulder community provided incredible gifts for the Monday morning raffle. Our gratitude goes to The Boulder Center for Sports Medicine, Southern Sun, Full Cycle Bicycle, The Trek Bicycle Store, Cliff Bar, Bicycle Village, In-Step Active Footwear and Insoles, Mickey C's Bagels & Boulder Ice Cream, King Soopers, and Café Sole. What fun treats the kids received!

I would also like to recognize a committee that stepped up and did a great job: Clare Stocker, Nan Rosenbloom, Simone Tilmes, Chesley McColl, Tammy Livingstone, Richele Mein, Andrea Runkel, Cassy Matthews, Kristina Robinson, and Ning Mosberger. Some of you did double duty, and I am so sorry if I forgot someone! Thanks, and until next year ... keep on walking and biking!

~ Christy Barth



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

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

Thriving During the Elementary Years: Importance of Early Intervention

We all know that long-term habits are hard to break. That's why addressing our children's learning, language, emotional, and behavioral challenges early on is so important. If your child is struggling at home, in school and/or with peers, it is important to first understand where these challenges are emanating from. And that's not always so easy to do. A child who "is not listening" in class may have a language-processing problem. Someone who bullies others may be struggling with self-image issues. Temper tantrums may be a desperate cry for attention. While it's every parent's hope that our children are simply going through a phase (and sometimes they are), if these challenges continue consider the following steps:

1. **Get Other's Feedback:** Check in with other adults in your child's life (teachers, other parents, relatives, etc.) and get their feedback as well. If



these issues are occurring in other settings, then it may be an issue unique to your child. If it's only happening in one setting, then the dynamics of that setting may play a role.

2. **Talk to Your Child:** On a good day at a positive moment discuss your concerns with your child in an open, supportive, non-threatening way. Try to elicit your child's viewpoints and feelings about your concerns. Ask what you can do to help.
3. **Consider an Assessment:** There are excellent learning, language, and behavioral experts who are trained to assess children and provide valuable feedback regarding their challenges. Ask your child's teacher and/or principal for recommendations.
4. **Develop an Action Plan:** Once you're clear about the type of issues that your child is struggling with, develop a plan of action to ensure that your child's difficulties are being addressed.

The longer we wait to address these issues, the more challenging they are to remediate and the more damage they are likely to cause.



UPCOMING PEN EVENTS

Teaching Heart
Recognize and Develop Social and Emotional Intelligence
The Key to a Child's Success and Wholeness
Presenter: Tom McSheehy, Therapist and Educator
www.teachingheart.com
Thursday, November 19th
9:00-11:00am
BVSD Education Center
6500 E Arapahoe Rd.
Boulder 80303

Learn more about PEN by visiting their website: www.parentengagementnetwork.org or by contacting Paula Nelson, PEN chair, [pnj6225@yahoo.com](mailto:pjn6225@yahoo.com) / (303) 880-6030, or Eugenia Brady, PEN Co-Chair, eugenia.brady@bvsd.org / (720) 447-1713.

Dr. Jan Hittelman, a licensed psychologist, is Director of Boulder Psychological Services and the Founder of the Boulder Counseling Cooperative. Questions or comments for this monthly column can be sent via email to jan.hittelman@gmail.com or by phone to (720) 217-3270.