

## Why is STEM Important?

Why is Mesa View making such a big investment in STEM? The staff has seen since we opened in 2009 the learning power of designing things, building things, and breaking things. Students learn how their world works when they have the opportunity to see and build it themselves. At the same time, STEM is a building block of the US economy and of future employment. The US Department of Commerce agrees:

### **STEM: Good Jobs Now and for the Future**

US Department of Commerce

*STEM drives our nation's innovation and competitiveness by generating new ideas, new companies, and new industries. However, U.S. businesses often voice concerns over the supply of STEM workers. Growth in STEM jobs is three times as fast as growth in non-STEM jobs. STEM workers are also less likely to experience joblessness than their non-STEM counterparts. STEM workers play a key role in the growth and stability of the U.S. economy.*

- In 2010, there were 7.6 million STEM workers in the United States, representing about 1 in 18 workers.
- STEM jobs are projected to grow by 17% through 2018, compared to 9% growth for non-STEM fields.
- STEM workers earn higher wages, 26% more than their non-STEM counterparts.
- STEM degree and certificate holders enjoy higher earnings, whether they work in STEM or non-STEM fields.

## Mesa View Middle School

*"Leaders Today, Learners Tomorrow"*

A DESIGNATED "STEM" ACADEMY  
FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-8

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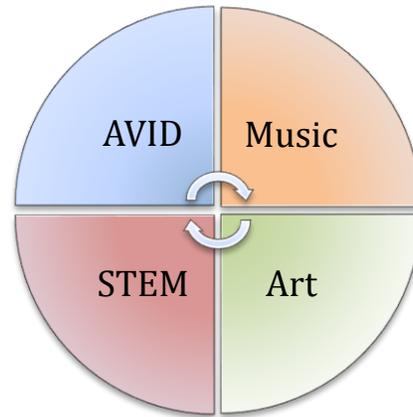
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## What is STEM?

STEM, standing for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, is an academic program that is growing by leaps and bounds at Mesa View. When a Mesa View student participates in High Performance Math (HiPerMath), launches Estes rockets, builds a functional windmill, or learns about space at NASA Family Science Night, he or she is experiencing STEM. The philosophy behind STEM is that students understand math and the sciences better when they experience them firsthand. Learning about parabolas in the textbook is one thing, for example, but trying to compute the actual parabola of your rocket – a rocket you built – is something else altogether. Students “get it” when they have to live the math and use technology to design, build, and improve their own creations. Over the last four years, teachers at Mesa View have expanded their understanding of STEM and broadened their experience teaching STEM lessons. With the STEM Academy, our successes expand even further, incorporating more activities and reaching every student. Mesa View is the only comprehensive middle school in the East Valley/Pass to offer a complete and differentiated STEM program to every student for all three years.

## Sixth Grade Program

Sixth graders attend Mesa View in a self-contained classroom setting somewhat similar to what would be seen at an elementary school. Students receive their core instruction in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies from a sixth grade teacher. Twice a week, students will go out to Physical Education taught by a PE teacher. Students will not dress out for PE, and they will not be mixed with seventh or eighth graders. Three times a week, students will go out to their elective class taught by a teacher trained in that particular subject area. Students will switch electives approximately every nine weeks on an “elective wheel:”



These are sixth grade only classes that also give students a “taste” of the electives they can take in future years.



## Seventh & Eighth Grade Program

Seventh and eighth graders take classes in a period setting, switching classes for their core subjects, PE, and an elective. Electives are grouped into two “paths:”

Dedicated STEM Electives
Students get STEM every day in one of three, year-long elective classes. All are on a two-year curricular cycle.
STEM: Advanced Design
STEM: Applied Science & Tech
STEM: Digital Media

Non-STEM Electives	
Students get STEM during four, week-long units, spread throughout the school year. Units are on a two-year curricular cycle.	
AVID	Learning Center
Art	Life Skills
Band	Literacy Support
Ceramics	SI Reading
Choir	Student Council
Computers	Study Skills
ELD	Yearbook