

Mountain View School



2013 – 2014 SCHOOL STATISTICS

Community: Suburban

Enrollment: 310

Grades: 5 – 8

Schedule: Modified Block

Demographics:

- 5% Asian
- 1% Hispanic
- 94% Caucasian
- 3% Free/Reduced
- 11% Special Education
- 0.5% ELL Student

NJASK Proficiency Scores (%)	6th	7th	8th
Lang. Arts	93	95	97
Mathematics	99	93	93
Science	--	--	98



Re-Designated in 2014

Original Designation 2008, First Re-Designation 2011
 Mendham Borough School District
 Charles Seipp, Principal
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School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Mountain View Middle School has exceeded the benchmark in standardized testing year after year due to exceptional staff and student preparation, on-going curricular development, our collaborative and reflective professional development and our documented commitment to best practices.
- The mathematics department continues to implement our innovative Math curriculum in grades 5 through 8, with all graduates completing Algebra 1 with extremely high success rates. A small cohort

of students are identified in the spring of fourth grade to bypass the fifth grade curriculum and enter directly into sixth grade Pre-Algebra. These students continue taking courses one academic year higher than their peers, ultimately studying high school Honors Geometry class as eighth graders.

- The ever-evolving Readers/Writers Workshop (Columbia University) method invites teachers to collaborate on unit mapping, aligning instruction between grade levels, achieving the Common Core Standards, addressing the unique and varied learning styles of the middle school student, and all the while collaborating for a cohesive approach to instruction across grade levels through professional learning communities.
- The Mountain View Science department continues to grow and find ways to meet the needs of the student population. Our school's Outdoor Learning Center (OLC), an outdoor classroom full of various learning opportunities, has been incorporated into the curriculum. Within the OLC, the students have tested germination growth of seeds through electrical stimulation, the proper needs of organisms and their environment, and metric measurement skills. Also within the classes, teachers continue to find ways to incorporate real-time data into investigations through various nationwide programs.
- The 5th and 6th grade classes have fully incorporated the use of the Interactive Science Notebook, which is organized to have students produce top quality work in a brain-based inquiry approach. All science classes use Google Docs to develop and share lab reports on in-class investigation.
- The Mountain View Social Studies Department continues its implementation of the rigorous, theme-based curriculum. This theme-based instruction continues to make Mountain View Social Studies teachers pioneers in their curricular area by integrating historical events into actual real-world, meaningful themes such as human commonality, human connection, human expression, and humankind. These themes focus on guiding questions that assist students with identifying how historical events have a lasting impact on our world and how they "fit into" that current and future history.
- All students and staff use an array of diverse instructional technology on a daily basis. Available technology includes Netbooks, ChromeBooks, iPads, Macs, SMARTBoards, two computer labs and laptop carts for each grade level. To avoid compatibility issues, all members of our learning community have Goggle log-ins to share documents and give immediate feedback. Programs such as Quizlet, Smart Music, Scratch, Google Drive, Photoshop, Khan Academy, TedEd are used by teachers for assessment and instruction. The infusion of online assessment is a critical component for preparing our students for "what's next" in education.

Developmental Responsiveness

- Mountain View continues its commitment to our EEE Program (Extension, Enrichment and Elective). EEE is a 30 minute period at the end of each day which is dedicated to meeting specific, individualized student needs. The EEE period offers teachers the capability of offering extended learning, enrichment activities, and elective opportunities to all students. Individual teachers make use of this time to support individual student needs as well as to target fundamental and NJASK-related skills. The EEE semester-long elective courses represent a variety of interests and talents, offering each student the opportunity to pursue his or her own educational interests, as well as seeing teachers in a different instructional light. EEE courses encourage students to continue to challenge their minds in an ungraded and social environment. Additionally, the EEE program shows students that teachers

can explore hobbies and interests without being experts. This is more realistic, emulating a lifelong love of learning.

- The Student Council at Mountain View School is committed to represent and serve their classmates, school, and community by promoting, organizing and executing community service projects and school spirit activities that encourage student pride and school spirit.
- The middle school experience begins early during the 6th grade year with the two-night, three-day Environmental Education Trip to Fairview Lake usually held the first week of October. The meticulously planned sojourn to the woods, provides opportunities for students to interact with all members of the extended class as they rotate through various learning centers including campfire cooking and safety, orienteering, ASE Course, swamp walk, lake limnology, and art in nature. Students bond while learning to appreciate nature and care for their environment. Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of this trip is that the curriculum and courses have all been developed and are instructed by Mountain View staff. Mountain View teachers accompany the students and forge relationships built upon trust and respect. Students grow as they challenge themselves to move outside their comfort zone.
- A formalized Advisory program has been implemented by the School Counselor based on the best practice series developed by the Origins Program's Developmental Designs approach. Students meet twice a month in small groups to integrate social and academic learning through two structured models: the Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus. A consistent format provides safety and structure for students, which includes a greeting, share time, an activity based on a monthly theme and a reflection period. Monthly themes highlight effective communication, organizational skills, making and keeping friends, emotional well-being (dealing with disappointment/anger/sadness), critical thinking and leadership, and embracing diversity. Given the opportunity to practice the skills they need to be successful academically and socially, students develop specific skills in cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. This approach to Advisory is designed to build a positive school community by providing an adult advocate for each child in school, while helping students develop trust in a way that makes school meaningful and pleasurable.

Social Equity

- Every course offered at the Mountain View School incorporates differentiation in its lessons as well as its assessments through tiering in order to best gauge student understanding with a true dedication to mastery of content. Continuous formative assessments ensure that teachers have a constant stream of data in order to adjust instruction to best meet student needs, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, and gender. Because students are grouped heterogeneously, each student has the opportunity to learn alongside their peers, regardless of readiness level. This inclusion model reinforces the message that all students are considered equal. Each student is provided the same opportunity to achieve success within the context of a differentiated classroom. The diversity in readiness level, student interest, and student learning profile encourages the instructors to develop demanding lessons and assessments that are present in each class.
- Mountain View has made an unwavering commitment to being a transparent school by providing parents with a variety of outlets to receive information about the activities in the school. These outlets include a comprehensive district and school website, principal's blog, monthly district newsletter, and

individual teacher websites, complete with support and instructional resources making the home and school connection a reality.

- The Mendham Borough Summer Enrichment Program has just completed its fourth year of offering a wide variety of classes designed to meet the needs of diverse learners across the Mendham area community. Teachers from Mountain View, as well as Hilltop Elementary School, design and teach week-long courses which are offered over a six-week period. Courses centered in science, math, language arts, art, technology, culinary arts, athletics, and environmental studies are just a few of the many areas of enrichment available through this Home School Association (HSA) sponsored program.
- The “Arts” reach out to the community in a variety of impressive ways. Musicians participate in seasonal concert performances. They also provide a musical component to the town tree lighting ceremony and a holiday concert at Regional Day School, which is a yearly tradition. Musicians participate in the High Note Musical Festival and compete with other schools where Mountain View musicians regularly earn high praise for their performance and skills. The annual Festival of the Arts is a year-end celebration of the arts at Mountain View where all work representing the creative endeavors of all students is showcased in an evening event. Youth Art Month is celebrated with an art exhibit at Mendham Public Library in addition to regular art exhibits held in local venues such as Mendham Books and the Morris County Library. Our biennial musical offers students in Grades 7 & 8 the opportunity to contribute in a variety of ways to a full theatre production. Whether performing or working behind the scenes on stage crew, the complexity and challenge of such a project brings forward the collaborative nature of all involved. The 2013 production, “Bugsy Malone”, saw the addition of a “Dinner Theater” evening in conjunction with the Mountain View Student Council.

Organizational Structures and Processes

- The Mendham Borough School District is extremely fortunate to have a significant parent organization, the Home School Association. The HSA cooperates with teachers and administrators to provide students enriching valuable resources and support every aspect of Mountain View School. The purpose, mission, and vision of the HSA has recently been re-envisioned in order to provide the district with one collaborative support structure, as opposed to multiple competing ventures. Highlights of HSA's contribution include a 5k Harvest Hustle run which raises funds for health and athletic programs, SmartBoard purchases for Mountain View classrooms, and involvement in the 8th grade Family Fun Fair, a fundraiser for the 8th grade Washington DC trip. Additionally, the relationship between HSA and teachers and administrators is a shining example of parents and professionals working together for the benefit of the students.
- The term “stakeholders” has almost become a cliché in education due to its constant overuse, but Mountain View is committed to ensuring that a critical stakeholder group has input in school decisions and maintains open lines of communication with the parents of the school community through the Parent Council. The Parent Council consists of eight members (two from each grade level) that meet monthly with the principal to discuss concerns from the community and to serve as a thoroughfare of information between the administration and the parents of the school. The value of this group can only be understated because its importance cannot be measured, based upon how communication has encouraged improvement in the experiences offered to our students. This commitment to stakeholder input even extends to students with the recent creation of the Lions’ Pride. This student-driven

advisory council meets monthly with the principal to provide a student perspective regarding the operations and goings on in the school. This student "voice" has gained a very positive response, very quickly!

- Team leaders are representatives of each academic team, who meet regularly with the Principal to discuss school-wide student issues, convey team-related concerns, and assist in coordinating the implementation of grade, subject, and school-level procedures, policies and initiatives. The team leader acts as a conduit between team members and administration, as well as other grade/subject level teams. The function of the group of team leaders is to act as a vital cog in the fluidity of state, district, and school initiatives, both academic and non-academic.
- The block-based schedule at Mountain View allows for daily meeting time for the individual grade level teams, as well as on-going communication and interaction between grade-level teams, the school counselor, and administration. These common planning times promote collaboration on student issues, professional development, evaluation of student work, assessment development, and cross-curricular connections. This time will continue to evolve to better allow co-teaching opportunities in mainstreamed classrooms.