



elevAte

ASPEN SCHOOLS CLIMBING TO NEW HEIGHTS

ASPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT





STATE OF THE SCHOOLS 2016

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

DR. JOHN MALOY

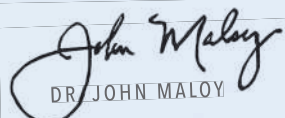
As we look back on the 2015-16 school year, a great deal of hard work, dedication, and commitment has been put forth by students, staff, and parents to make it a very successful year. Our schools were recognized by the state of Colorado for their excellent work and students' academic achievement and the District maintained its identification of "Accredited with Distinction." The Aspen community and all of the Aspen schools can take pride in the fact that Aspen High School was ranked by a national publication as the number one high school in the state of Colorado out of 22,000 public high schools and the Aspen School District was ranked as the number one School District in Colorado and the 24th best School District in America.

Also, the outdoor education and experiential education trips provided wonderful experiences and opportunities for all K-12 students to learn outside the walls of the classroom and interact with their peers in different ways. From these experiences, students always seem to become a little more reflective about who they are and their place in the community and the world.

The high school athletic program produced several league champions and state play-off teams. The K-12 performing arts program provided opportunities to observe our talented students in plays and concerts while our visual arts program provided exhibitions and displays of gifted work that were beyond the years of our young artists, sculptors, and wood workers.

We said good-bye to our seniors and we rest easier knowing that over 93% of them are prepared to attend the colleges and universities of their choice. With the incredible experiences our seniors have had in the Aspen schools and the tremendous support provided by the Aspen community, our young people are destined to become future leaders of society and make their place in the world.

Now we look forward to the 2016-17 academic year. We have some key new administrators and faculty, a new group of students coming into the district as well as a new class of seniors who will work hard to make their families, teachers, and the community proud. I look forward to making this journey with them and I hope we will bring you along as well.


DR. JOHN MALOY



PRESIDENT, BOARD OF EDUCATION

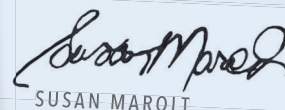
SUSAN MAROLT



On behalf of the Aspen School District and Board of Education, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your continued support of our school community. We understand that you value innovative programming, small class sizes and talented staff, all which are hallmarks of our District. To continue to provide these things to our students, the Board is committed to both the efficient and conscientious spending of district funds, and the acquisition of stable, long-term funding solutions, which will carry us into the future.

As we have not been able to depend on the State's contribution to our annual operating budget, we have reached out to the community to help provide local funding sources to bridge that gap. The community responded enthusiastically with the passage of the mill levy ballot question last November, providing the District with \$990,000 annually.

Also, the City of Aspen sales tax has been providing approximately \$1.9 million annually. This tax is set to sunset at the end of 2016 and the Aspen Public Education Fund has requested that the City of Aspen renew the sales tax this fall. In addition, the Town of Snowmass Village has agreed to a provision on their ballot, which would generate approximately \$500,000 annually for the District. All of these pieces, including generous contributions from Aspen Education Foundation, are a critical part of the a long-term funding plan that as a District we would like to put into place to continue to provide the exemplary education that our community appreciates and expects.


SUSAN MAROLT

SMALL CHANGES ADD UP TO **BIG SAVINGS**



AROUND ASPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT YOU MIGHT NOT NOTICE ANY CHANGES BUT THEY'RE THERE: new efficient LED light bulbs, balanced heating and cooling ventilators systems that saw high school savings last year of approximately \$45,000. There were upgrades to wiring and infrastructure, and new buses are retrofitted with equipment that will reduce idling emissions and save the District thousands of dollars. Other low-impact initiatives such as recycling stations, and new filtered water fountains reduce waste and add to a greener planet. Thanks in part to a \$125,000 grant from a 2013 Holy Cross Energy "Think Big Grant," that paid for many energy upgrades, just these small changes have already saved the District tens of thousands of dollars.

"Sustainability has been a value of the District for many years," says Tom Heald, assistant superintendent, Aspen School District. "We try to incorporate the notion of green practices not only in the decisions we make as a District, but also in our curriculum to engage our students and reinforce thoughtful practices."

When the new Middle School was built, the design incorporated so many environmentally-friendly aspects that it was given a Gold LEED certification, the first school building in the state of Colorado to achieve that status.

The school district is partnering with the City of Aspen in the Aspen Energy Challenge, part of the Georgetown Energy Prize Competition, which measures the overall reduction in energy usage for the years 2015 and 2016. Aspen is currently in second place, competing against 48 other small municipalities. The winning community will receive \$5 million.

Ashley Perl, Climate Action Manager for the City of Aspen says that time spent supporting the school district is time well spent. "The Aspen School District is responsible for teaching our youth to be good stewards of our planet, and the creation of a sustainable community starts at our schools. The practices we learn at a young age stay with us. For these reasons and more, the City of Aspen supports the school district in making environmental sustainability a part of not only what they teach, but also part of everyday life at the District".

At a recent Sustainability Summit, stakeholders from around the District offered ideas to continue to lower the carbon footprint of the campus. One of those ideas was to conduct an energy audit of the Elementary School, which has been granted by the State of Colorado Energy Office.

Some other ideas are: install electric charging stations, focus on reducing vehicle trips to campus, create parking spots designated for carpool vehicles, and incorporating sustainability best practices into the curriculum at all levels.

"We recognize that humanity stands at a defining moment and that as good stewards of the public trust we must always be working to develop collaborative processes to reinforce sustainable practices on our campus, and with our students and stakeholders. This is a trust we hold in high regard"

—TOM HEALD

**NEW EFFICIENT LED LIGHT BULBS
BALANCED HEATING & COOLING VENTILATORS SYSTEMS**

**SAVED APPROXIMATELY
\$45,000**

ASPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT SERVES ALL STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF NEED

IMAGINE HAVING A CHILD WHO FALLS OUTSIDE THE “NORM” WHEN IT COMES TO LEARNING. That can be a lonely, scary place for a parent. But parents in the Aspen School District aren’t alone. There are a team of qualified teachers, specialists, counselors, paraprofessionals, and administrators who make sure that each child in the District has access to what they need to be successful students.

“We can evaluate children, even from birth, to determine if they need special education services,” says Heather Abraham, Director of Special Education at the Aspen School District. “For children that young, we collaborate with community organizations and doctors, and then once the child has been determined eligible at the age of three, they can enroll in The Cottage for preschool services. In addition, children may be eligible for services throughout their educational careers until they graduate or turn 21.”

In the 2015-2016 academic year, there are approximately 180 students in the District who receive Special Education services, and between 20 percent and 28 percent of students, depending on the school, who receive some kind of additional support, whether that be academic assistance, social-emotional support, speech services, or other related services.

“We braid our services through a variety of staff members so that the students get what they need in their general education classes, only pulling them out when necessary.”

— HEATHER ABRAHAM

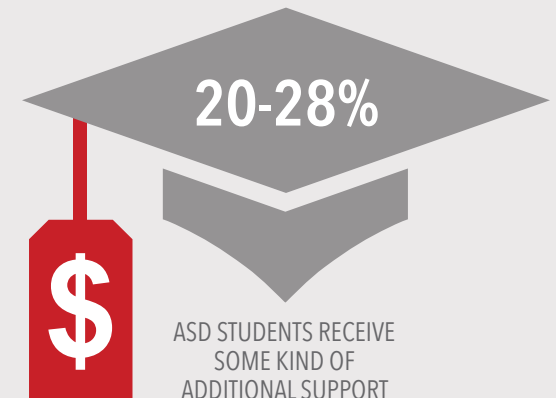
For students who may learn at a quicker rate, special programs, such as the Ascent Program in the elementary and middle schools, offer projects that expose students to rigorous tasks and applied knowledge to select activities and assignments.

“It’s a privilege to identify our students’ strengths and watch them grow,” says Ascent program coordinator at the elementary school Julie Wille.

Abraham sees an ever-increasing trend in the number of students needing assistance. Currently, there are 35 full-time employees at the Aspen School District who help students with special needs. In some cases, such as the Ascent Program, it’s a matter of accreditation. In the area of Special Education, the services are state and federally mandated, although primarily unfunded. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the State of Colorado funded approximately 15 percent of total costs. The Aspen Education Foundation helps support some full time salaries and 20 percent of the Aspen sales tax also is directed into Special Education funding. The rest of the funding shortfall lands on the shoulders of the school district.

“We provide a high standard of support to our students and our families. They appreciate our efforts and know that we have their children’s success as the centerpiece of everything we do,” says Abraham.

FUNDING FACTS



ASPEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MULTI-TIER SUPPORT SYSTEM [MTSS]

MTSS ENSURES

**Every Student Receives the
Appropriate Level of Support to be Successful**

MTSS INTERVENTION

29% Students Benefitted

DEAR AES FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY,

I am honored and excited to be the new principal of Aspen Elementary School. The Aspen community's deep commitment to the education and well-being of its children was clearly evident during my recent visit to your beautiful campus. I look forward to meeting all the students and getting ready for a wonderful year.

With sincere appreciation,

Chris Basten
CHRIS BASTEN



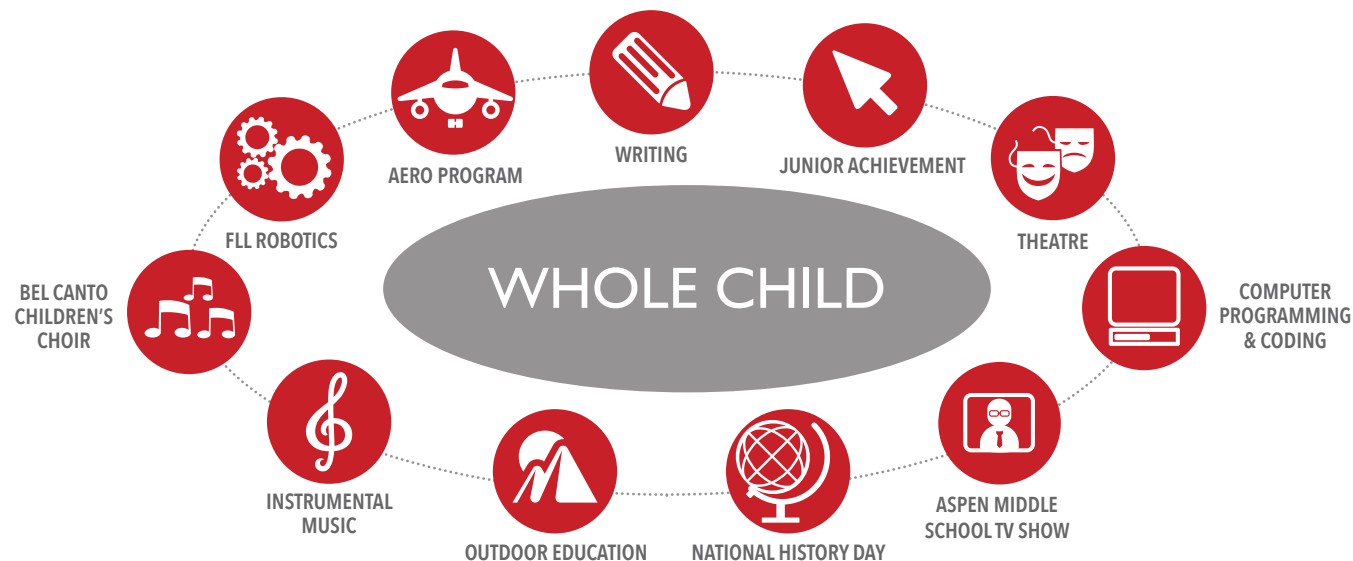
AT THE ASPEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WE SUPPORT EACH STUDENT'S GROWTH WITH ACADEMIC, EMOTIONAL, AND INTELLECTUAL EXPLORATION. Students learn from traditional classroom-style methods, augmented with special experiences that bring that content to life. The AES offers specialists in all areas who give extra assistance or extra rigor. Some special programs that we offer our young students are:

- Spellbinders storytelling
- Read With Me
- Newberry Book Club
- The Buddy Program
- Common Sense Media: the Making of Good Digital Citizens
- Author visits
- Environmental Education program in conjunction with the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies
- Student Managers, 3rd and 4th graders who mediate conflicts at recess
- The Fraser Writing Competition
- Chess Master visit

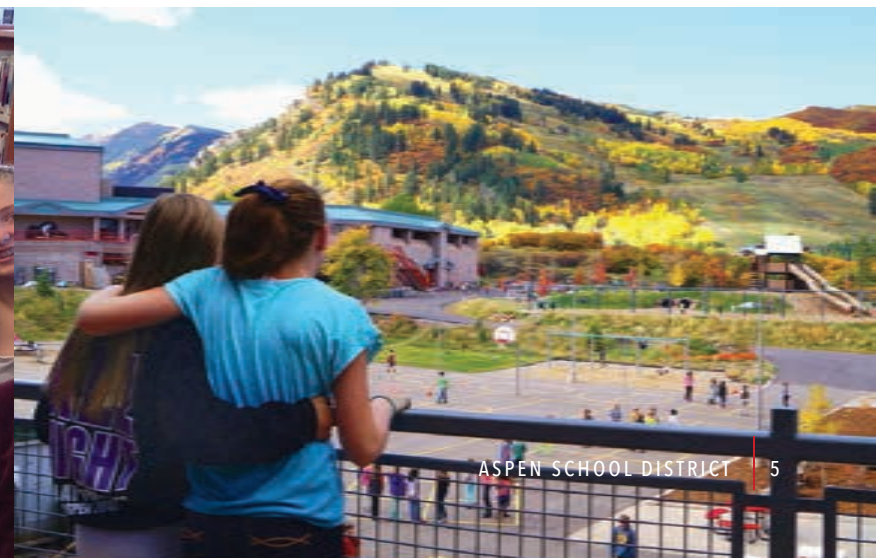


EMBRACING A CULTURE OF CHARACTER, STUDENTS AND STAFF AT ASPEN MIDDLE SCHOOL STRIVE TO CONSISTENTLY EXHIBIT AND REFLECT UPON THE FOLLOWING SKIER TRAITS: Self, Kindness, Integrity, Effort, and Respect. The Aspen Middle School staff supports students to optimize growth and achievement while promoting students to be well-rounded learners, who are innovative thinkers, poised to be kind, caring and proactive members of society.

Students at the Aspen Middle School are offered a matrix of award-winning opportunities that encapsulate learning for the Whole Child



THE AVERAGE TENURE FOR
ASPEN MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHERS IS AN IMPRESSIVE
12 YEARS!





ASPEN HIGH SCHOOL

THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2016

3.473 GPA

[HIGHEST GPA IN THE HISTORY OF ASPEN HS]

IN 2001 ASPEN HIGH SCHOOL BECAME ONE OF THE SMALLEST PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES TO OFFER STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) COURSES AS WELL AS EARN AN IB DIPLOMA.

Currently, there are over 200 juniors and seniors who are enrolled in one or more IB classes in 13 different subjects and 19 who are pursuing an IB diploma.

"The IB curriculum is ideal because it has academic rigor and prepares students with skills they need, like time management, to be successful in college. It marries skills and content at a high level." –TAMEIRA WILSON, ASPEN HIGH SCHOOL IB COORDINATOR

Students who score well on IB exams also may earn college credit, which puts them ahead of their peers.

The IB curriculum is standardized throughout the world and teachers at Aspen High School incorporate an international perspective into their course content. This means that students who graduate from Aspen High School are prepared to be good global citizens.

As our students mature, Aspen High School challenges their notions of their place in the world and how they can serve. We offer them opportunities to try on different roles they may want to pursue such as: Model UN, Future Young Business Leaders of America, a year abroad with our Sister Cities program, Freshman Seminar and Discovery, applied learning with S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), theater, music, Culinary Arts, and so much more.



THE ASPEN COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS PROUD TO BE A CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE ASPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT! FOR OVER 45 YEARS ACS HAS PROVIDED A UNIQUE, TUITION-FREE CHOICE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS IN THE ROARING FORK VALLEY.

OUR MISSION IS SIMPLE: to foster lifelong learning. We achieve this goal by focusing on three, mutually inclusive domains: academic excellence, building strong relationships, and engaging students in relevant curriculum, all of which are achieved in a small school setting.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: In order for students to be successful learners they need to master academic skills. Our primary foci are literacy, mathematics, wellness and the arts.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: Community is woven into the fabric of everything we do at ACS.

RELEVANCE: We engage students in learning that is meaningful. Students are frequently asked to make connections between subjects and participate in group projects.

SMALL CLASS SIZE: By combining small groups of students with highly trained, passionate teachers, we make a difference academically and socially in the lives of every student.

ACS AT A GLANCE

- 135 students
- K-8 school
- 15 full-time, highly qualified teachers; 3 teacher assistants.
- 60-90 minutes of literacy and math instruction, 5x per week, for all students.
- 98% more arts instruction than the national average.
- 100% of students participate in experiential education, character education, and community service.
- Top 93 percentile scored by students on standardized tests in reading, writing, and math. Among the highest in the State of Colorado.
- New, state-of-the-art schoolhouse, targeting LEED Gold and Carbon Neutral Challenge 2030, inaugurated in 2015.



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ASPEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

FOR 25 YEARS ASPEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION (AEF) HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO RAISING MONEY FOR ASPEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ITS STUDENTS. OUR VALUES ARE REFLECTED IN OUR MISSION.

- We believe that our children deserve life-changing educational experiences that enrich the mind, body, and spirit, and provide them with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in college and beyond.
- We believe that all K-12 Aspen Public School students benefit from the generosity of families and members of the community.
- We believe that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that we maintain the levels of excellence that we have come to expect.
- We believe that the entire Aspen community benefits from a strong public education system.

Colorado State funding gaps for education continue to persist and worsen. Thankfully, for the last 25 years, AEF has contributed over \$7 million to support our public schools.



BROOKE BEDINGFIELD
Executive Director,
Aspen Education Foundation



OUR HISTORY

For the last 25 years the Aspen Education Foundation (AEF) has been committed to raising money for the Aspen School District and its students.

In 1991 a group of parents started what is now the Aspen Education Foundation (AEF) to raise money for the Aspen schools for the purpose of increasing the quality of the schools through funding additional programs and teacher salaries.

OUR PRESENT

Today, the Aspen Education Foundation is run by an 18-person volunteer board and a small staff. Relying on private and community contributions, AEF in recent years has contributed between \$400,000 and \$700,000 annually to the Aspen School District. We invest in our children from kindergarten through the college admissions process, supporting students, teachers, programs, and capital needs.

ASPEN SCHOOLS – THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

The state of Colorado ranks 43rd in the nation in per-pupil funding, just above Alabama and below South Dakota, and the financial outlook is bleak. Simply maintaining financial stability to maintain current academic standards is an ongoing challenge. Community commitment via bond and tax initiative approvals, efficient budgeting and private donations through AEF have helped tremendously, however, as of today we face the potential of a \$2.2 million annual gap left by further restricted State funding.

OUR FUTURE

AEF aspires to enliven Aspen's value of an educated population and it will ambitiously lead and advocate for educational spending, support, and excellence. Our goal is to make outstanding educational opportunities possible for all of our students and provide a stable funding source for our schools for both the present and the future.

MISSION SERVES THE DISTRICT AND ITS STUDENTS

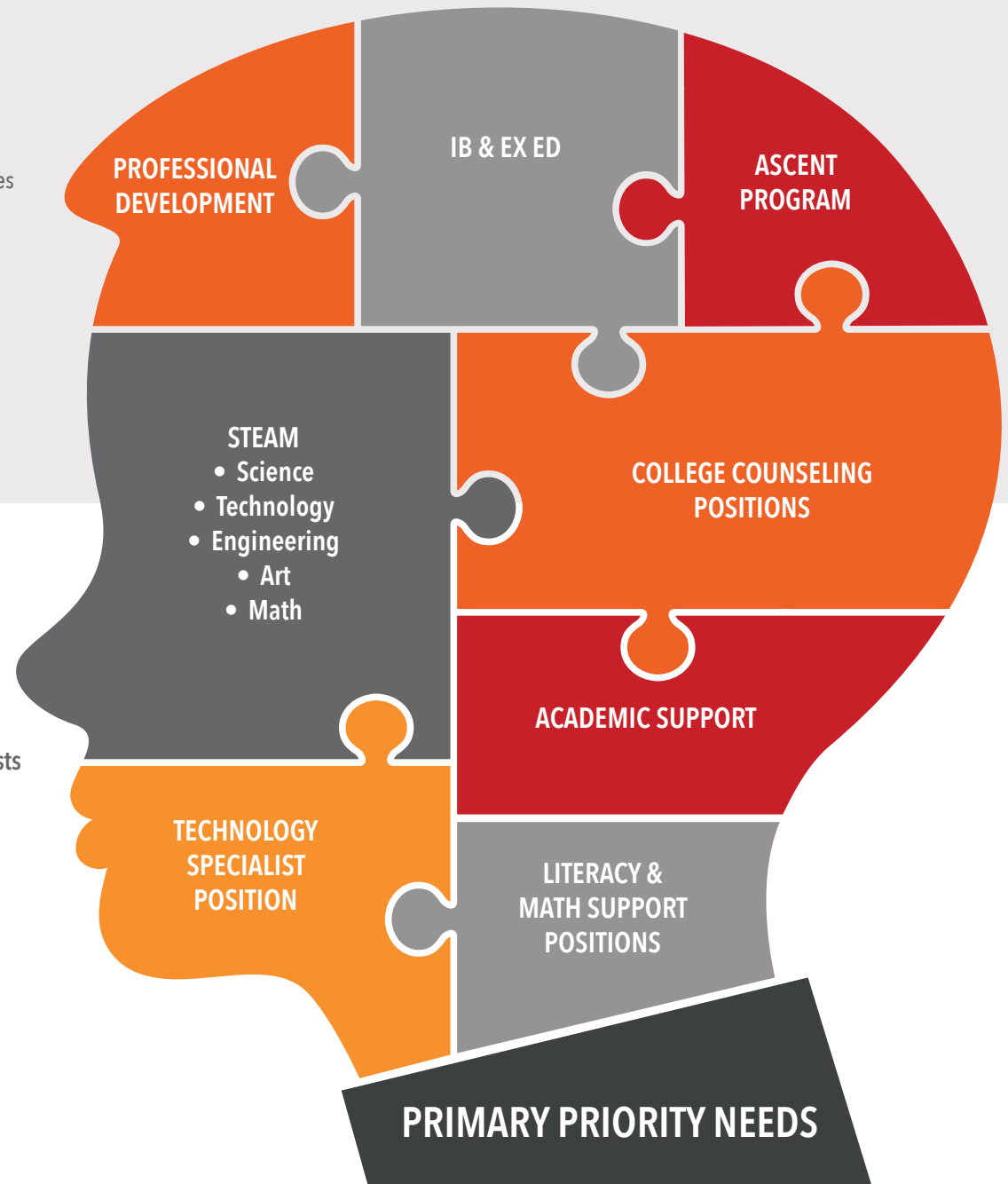
ASPEN SCHOOLS – ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite serious financial challenges, the Aspen School District has achieved high academic rankings in Colorado. Aspen High School maintains a strong graduation and college matriculation rate, and graduates of the high school attend top-notch universities nationally and internationally.

The Aspen School District has not achieved its current strength and stature by happenstance. Committed vision, leadership, and financial support were thoughtfully given by caring parents and community members and through AEF.

AEF SUPPORTS:

- Literacy & Numeracy Programs
- Academic Support
- Aeronautics Program & Lab
- Outdoor Education
- Music
- Performing Arts
- International Baccalaureate
- Ascent Program
- Robotics
- Digital Art Lab
- Sciences
- Reading & Technology Specialists
- College Counseling
- Athletics
- Classroom Needs
- Student Scholarships
- Teacher and Staff Professional Development & Awards



MUSIC & THEATER PROGRAMS SPEAK TO THE heART

MUSIC

This has been another successful year for the band program. Selected high school and middle school musicians performed in the Aspen Music Festival and School's All-Valley Band and Choir, and featured ensembles of over 100 students and guest conductors from around the country. We celebrated the inauguration of the Double Black Diamond Band, which is an audition-only ensemble at Aspen Middle School. This group represented the school district at a World Strides OnStage festival in Colorado Springs, as well as Colorado West Invitational Music Festival, which is the largest music festival in the state, and earned Excellent ratings from the panel at both events. The AMS Jazz Ensemble also performed in the Colorado West Invitational Festival, and took home the program's first-ever Superior rating.

Selected students also participated in a CHSAA Solo and Ensemble contest, and we are proud to announce that over half of our musicians earned Superior ratings. The Double Black Diamond Band, along with the high school band and vocal students, also traveled to Disney World, where they performed on stage at Disney Springs for an audience of over 1,000.

THEATER

In the fall semester the students performed the Fall Play, "Aesop Refabled", directed by Alie Walsh in the Black Box. In December 16 students attended "Thescon" the annual Colorado State Thespian Conference where approximately 5,000 high school students from Colorado gather for a 3-day conference in the Denver Convention Center to take theatre workshops and classes taught by professional directors, actors and the seniors were able to audition for college scholarships to over 80 theatre schools from universities nationwide. In the spring, over 50 AHS students participated in the Spring Musical, Legally Blonde, which was directed by Logan Carter, choreographed by Alie Walsh, Music Directed by Jeff Loda and Orchestra Conducted by Steve Heldt. Stephanie Nixon's art students and John Fisher's woodshop students also participated in helping with the set. In April 22 students went to the Denver Center for Performing Arts to see the Broadway tour of Newsies. Also in April Logan took her Acting for Stage and Film Class to the Western Confluence One Act Competition in Parachute to perform the One Act Play, Selfie, which was awarded "Best Director" by the former president of the Educational Theatre Association and Chapter Director for the Colorado State Thespians.



EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION:

A WEEK-LONG, IN-DEPTH JOURNEY

Aspen High School students take a week in September to extend the classroom with in-depth learning in topics that range from Learning to Dive, 3D Printing through Chess, to Urban Immersion-The Bronx and many other courses. Awarded through a points-earned lottery process, the unique AHS Ex-Ed program embodies the ideals of social, emotional, and academic learning.

ASPEN VALLEY LAND TRUST HELPS PRESERVE A TRADITION

For almost 50 years, Aspen 8th graders have participated in Outdoor Education. But that almost came crashing to a halt. The 47-acre grove of beautiful Aspen trees named the Marble "Basecamp" was going up for sale. This basecamp had been the emotional terminus to the week-long outdoor learning adventure, and protecting it forever became a goal.

In partnership with the Aspen Valley Land Trust, the community came together and raised the \$550,000 project cost. Thanks in part to a generous \$243,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), and a lead gift of \$50,000 from the Chapin Wright Flatirons Foundation, along with 350 generous donors and foundations, the land was purchased in May 2016. The property will be named in honor of Chapin Wright, an Aspen High School senior who died tragically on the night of graduation in 1972. The basecamp will now be known as the Chapin Wright Marble Basecamp.

The purchase includes a conservation easement to Crested Butte Land Trust that permanently protects the property's wild, native habitat and requires it be made available for outdoor education in perpetuity.

The Aspen Valley Land Trust has been able to preserve 39,000 acres of land through conservation, easements, and property purchases from Aspen all the way to Rifle, including 60 miles of rivers and streams that will be protected forever.

"The Chapin Wright Marble Basecamp is our first land acquisition strictly for educational use. This was an incredible partnership that assures this special property will be available for outdoor education programs for local schools...forever!"

—VALERY KELLY, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR FOR AVL T

OUTDOOR EDUCATION:

HELPS STUDENTS GROW THROUGH OUTDOOR CHALLENGES

Beginning in 1968, Aspen Middle School students have been able to expand their characters, and gain knowledge through adventures in nature. Each grade has a different trip so that the experiences are everlasting and age appropriate.

5th Grade: Four day, three-night trip to Arches National Park in Utah.

6th Grade: Three-day backcountry hut trip on telemark skis starting at the top of Vail Pass.

7th Grade: Five-day rafting adventure down the Colorado River.

8th Grade: Weeklong trip backpacking the Maroon/Snowmass Wilderness, culminating with group initiative activities.

"It is rare for a public school to be able to provide a comprehensive outdoor education program like this. Students are challenged as individuals and work in cooperative groups while developing problem-solving skills, perseverance, tolerance, empathy, and the ability to embrace each other's differences." —CRAIG ROGERS, PRINCIPAL OF AMS



ROBOTICS

ASPEN FIRST LEGO LEAGUE MAKES HISTORY

For the first time in Aspen School District history, a team from the Aspen First Lego League took first place in the Innovative Solutions Award for Cable Chomper, at the statewide competition in Denver last January. The topic was Trash Trek, and more than 233,000 children from 80 countries explored the fascinating world of trash. This group, made up of 7th graders continued to astound the community when they were one of only 20 teams, out of over 10,000 teams around the world, asked to present their ideas at the Global Innovation Award Competition in Washington DC over the summer.

ASPEN AEROSPACE ALLIANCE

AV8R PROGRAM TAKES EDUCATION TO NEW HEIGHTS

Using AEROSpace and AERONautics as a conduit to high-tech postsecondary education and careers, the K-12 Aspen AERO AV8R Program offers students a compelling and comprehensive educational experience. We create 21st Century learners by incorporating the elements of S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) into our AERONautics and AEROSpace curriculum.

Our certification programs are approved by the Federal Aviation Administration and can translate into college credit when transferring to an institution with an Aviation program.

Our students not only get the hands-on experience of flying, designing and building, but they come away with life skills that will propel them into any career they desire.

SPORTS

Aspen Athletics offers an amazing array of athletic and Colorado High School Activities Association sponsored activities. Aspen High School offers 25 of the CHSAA sponsored activities, second highest in the state. With this many opportunities Aspen High School students collaboratively have about 75 percent participation throughout the entire student body in these activities.

The high level of athleticism and competitive nature of the Aspen community inspires and trickles down into the high school-sponsored events yielding high levels of success for all of our programs. We have several individual state champions roaming the halls and also many team successes with league, conference and state championships! The tradition of Aspen High School Athletics is at the top of its game now more than ever and continues to have great feeder programs from the Aspen Middle School and community that replenish the pipeline for many of our programs. Without the community support to our programs at the youth and high school level we would not have the success we do.

AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL WE OFFER:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| • Volleyball | • Football | • Nordic Skiing |
| • Boy's Golf | • Girl's Softball | • Baseball |
| • Girl's Golf | • Alpine Skiing | • Boy's Lacrosse |
| • Boy's Soccer | • Boy's Basketball | • Girl's Lacrosse |
| • Girl's Soccer | • Boy's & Girl's Hockey | • Track & Field |
| • Boy's Tennis | • Girl's Basketball | • Girl's Tennis |
| • Cross-Country | • Girl's Swimming | |



COLLEGE COUNSELING & GRADUATION

ASPEN HIGH SCHOOL IS THE ONLY HIGH SCHOOL OF DISTINCTION ON THE WESTERN SLOPE WITH DEDICATED COLLEGE COUNSELING.

The mission and intention that every student can go to college has paid off. Over the last decade, more than 90 percent of Aspen High School graduates have enrolled in an impressive variety of national and international post-secondary institutions.

Beyond traditional counseling services, the College

Counseling office offers: Discovery classes for juniors to introduce them to the college application process, weekly evening roundtables where students can get assistance with various aspects of their applications such as writing resumes, essays and other tasks. Additionally, parents are invited as partners in the process by attending quarterly college classes.

Two capstone events: The Spring Symposium and the College Fair, offer not only Aspen High School students, but also the entire western region of Colorado, a chance to learn the college application process as well as meet over 250 admission representatives from all over the U.S. and beyond.



OH! THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

ASPEN HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2016





ASPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Aspen, Colorado 81611

970.925.3760

If you would like news and highlights from the Aspen School District please email: arittenhouse@aspenk12.net to join our Community Connections email updates.

WWW.ASPENK12.NET

