

# School Support and Readiness Assessment Summary Report

<b>School:</b> The International School at Mesa del Sol	<b>LEA:</b> Albuquerque Public Schools
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## School Description

The International School at Mesa del Sol offers a variety of grade levels for its community: pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. Families come from many zip codes, including Mesa del Sol, South Valley, Northeast Heights, Westside, Bosque Farms, Peralta, Los Lunas, Edgewood, and Belen. Many families are related to one another or have some connection.

The International School at Mesa del Sol's (TIS) strength is establishing and developing authentic, long-lasting relationships built on trust, objectivity, and vulnerability. Their students play an active role in the results of their learning experiences.

TIS' International Baccalaureate (IB) programming at the elementary and middle school levels and the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Framework in high school prepares students to be active participants in an ever-changing world, providing them with environments to succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. Connecting these programs has helped cultivate an environment where each student and staff member feels appreciated and accepted for who they are while being supported and encouraged to improve and grow continually.

The International School at Mesa del Sol supports students with two full-time social workers. School-wide incentives address attendance and behavior. The McKeshum Industries Critical Thinking Skills and Thought Management (MICTS&T) critical thinking program offers students in grades six to twelve stewardship and career-based learning experiences.

The school's mission is as follows:

*Our mission is to empower students within an inclusive environment that fosters authentic experiences. In our culture of community, we promote academic responsibility and student agency with purposeful social connections.*

The school's vision is as follows:

*Our approach is to lead students to develop a global vision and sense of citizenship that enhances, preserves, and contributes to their communities. We are committed to inspiring collaborative, creative, and critical thinkers who embrace learning and actively apply knowledge that leads to innovative contributions. We encourage compassionate, empathetic, and resilient students who have the opportunity to lead the world around them through service learning and understanding various perspectives. We believe that our students can incorporate holistic experiences while expanding their voices within local and global perceptions. We celebrate the diversity of our school community, which aims to allow international-mindedness that reflects our commitment to growth as lifelong learners.*

## School Successes and Celebrations

The International School at Mesa del Sol is a close-knit community where students, staff, parents, and leaders have connections akin to family. This bond is underscored by the commitment of teachers and leaders to the students. Reciprocity is evident in the support students provide to one another and, in turn, the support extended by the teachers to the students.

The school community has garnered recognition as a model for K-5 literacy; they have also embraced the International Baccalaureate (IB) model. Students feel safe and are empowered and accountable for their learning journey. With the addition of new leadership, there is an energy in the school dedicated to realizing the mission.

## DOMAIN 2: LEADERSHIP

*To what degree does school leadership establish, communicate, support, and monitor schoolwide priorities?*

### Promising Practices:

Various structures of support exist for teachers throughout the school. The IB coordinator, the special education director, social workers, and school leaders all work together to guide students and teachers in best practices, instructional strategies, and social-emotional learning needs.

An active leadership team collaborates closely with teachers to solve problems, identify professional development (PD) needs, and successfully roll out new initiatives. Introducing advisory classes for middle and high school students reflects a proactive effort to focus on course completion and success. This targeted class allows high school students to assess their progress in credit attainment and plan their next steps to graduation and beyond.

The leadership team operates with a clear understanding of the 90-Day Plan. This document guides the practices and systems at the school, demonstrating a strategic approach to school improvement. Leadership delegates walkthroughs to coordinators and directors to provide effective feedback to teachers. Feedback is then provided face-to-face to ensure teacher support.

### Opportunities for Growth:

There is an opportunity to further build and structure foundational systems within the school. This includes observation and feedback processes, the scope and sequence, and integrating these two with the IB standards. Establishing clear and comprehensive systems in these areas can provide a structured framework for continuous improvement at the school.

**Potential Next Steps:**

New leadership can define priorities and take the lead in driving them forward. This may involve setting clear goals, outlining strategic priorities, or identifying critical aspects of the 90-Day Plan for focus. The team plans to change this area by ensuring that agendas are provided for every meeting, contributing to more productive discussions and strategic planning opportunities.

The school leaders are engaged in a plan to enhance the effectiveness of classroom observations by scheduling designated times for walkthroughs with specific action items. Following the walkthroughs, feedback will be provided, and a structured follow-up process will be implemented to address any identified areas of improvement.

**DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

*To what degree is the school's instructional infrastructure in place, understood, and utilized by school leaders and teachers?*

**Promising Practices:**

Strong vertical alignment exists in pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school places particular emphasis on the literacy component in these grades. Teachers collaborate on instruction, particularly in the primary grades, fostering a cohesive and aligned approach across classrooms.

One element of promise at TIS is the presence of hands-on learning for all students, providing them with engaging and experiential opportunities. The master schedule, as well as Edgenuity, are leveraged to accommodate individual student needs. This includes the flexibility for students to make up classes or get ahead, fostering student involvement with personalized learning objectives.

**Opportunities for Growth:**

There is an opportunity to enhance the educational framework by clearly defining the curriculum (the core standards to be taught and when to teach them) and their connection to the IB standards. Establishing a well-structured framework in this regard will guide curriculum planning and ensure alignment with the standards and principles of the IB model.

While the school fosters consistent collaboration amongst the lower grades, there exists an opportunity to structure collaboration time for teachers at the secondary level. An intentional time allocation would empower teacher teams to collaborate and deepen their understanding of specific grade-level standards to align assessments and instructional approaches.

Finally, leadership may further enhance the teaching and learning environment by taking a more active role in conducting walkthroughs with a specific focus on teaching practices.

**Potential Next Steps:**

The school leaders intend to leverage early release Wednesdays for middle and high school subject overviews. This strategic use of time could allow educators to ensure a shared understanding and alignment with curriculum standards.

In addition to subject overviews, walkthroughs will be performed with a specific focus on critical standards that align with IB/21<sup>st</sup>-Century elements (IB Core). By observing and evaluating the incorporation of subject-specific elements, such as those emphasized by the IB program, educators and leaders can identify areas of strength and opportunities for enhancement. This approach could align teaching practices with overarching goals while at the same time supporting the development of staff.