



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 17, 2018

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El Monte Union Zoo Crew Pathway Seeks to Engage Students in Engineering

New STEM program to launch at Mountain View High School in the fall

EL MONTE – Protecting wildlife as a natural resource for future generations is the focus of a new architectural design and engineering pathway expected to launch this fall at Mountain View High School.

The science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program, “Zoo Crew: Engineers Gone Wild!” will allow students the opportunity to study the health and well-being of animals in the wild. The course will also challenge students to create solutions that promote environmental sustainability while maintaining the delicate balance between developing metropolitan areas and adjoining natural habitats.

“Zoo Crew is a career technical education pathway designed for students who are eager to engage with their peers in real-world, project-based learning,” said Mountain View engineering teacher Lee Porter, who will lead the program. “Every class lesson will center on a different aspect of animal protection, whether designing and building a feral dog shelter, a wildlife crossing structure or a zoo habitat.”

Students in the program will be introduced to the four major branches of engineering and learn how each branch relates to helping wildlife as they develop the engineering mindset – taking an idea from the brainstorming stage all the way through to completion. Students will use Autodesk Inventor and 3D printers to become proficient at 2-D and 3-D computer-aided design (CAD) and animation.

Year one of the program will concentrate on basic engineering principles as students gradually build their skill sets. Students will listen to guest speakers, take field trips to the Los Angeles and San Diego zoos, and observe animals in the classroom. The following year becomes more challenging, incorporating physics and animatronics as students engage in more complex projects to preserve and protect wildlife.

School officials hope the pathway will motivate more female and underrepresented students to explore STEM fields.

“The prospect of studying engineering can be daunting for many students who don’t realize that they hold the key to success with their own creative talents,” Porter said. “Zoo Crew is a way to engage the students emotionally and initiate projects that will have an immediate impact, while receiving a thorough and rigorous

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introduction to engineering and environmental science through fun and challenging activities like building a villa for a chinchilla.”

The Zoo Crew pathway was created thanks to a Specialized Secondary Program (SSP) grant from the California Department of Education. The grant includes \$110,000 to implement the curriculum for the 2018-19 school year and an additional \$75,000 for 2019-20.

“The Zoo Crew design and engineering pathway reflects the District’s commitment to providing every student, including those who may think engineering is out of their reach, the opportunity to pursue and explore STEM subjects,” Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. “Our creative and talented team has put together a curriculum that engages students and inspires them to want to learn more.”

For more information on how to enroll, contact a school counselor or the Guidance Office at Mountain View High School by calling (626) 443-6181. For any questions regarding the program, email lee.porter@emuhsd.org.

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