PROGRAMS OF STUDY
ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN
CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY
AUTOMOTIVE COLLISION
AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY
ENGINEERING
ROBOTICS
LOGISTICS
FIREFIGHTER
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN
THERAPY OCCUPATIONAL
MEDICAL ASSISTANT
DENTAL ASSISTANT
COMPUTER SCIENCE
GRAPHIC DESIGN

NOW ENROLLING!
ARE YOU A VANGUARD?

I AM A VANGUARD
LEADING THE WAY IN 2021

2021 National School Public Relations Communication Award
Gold Medallion Entry
Special Communication Project
Mesquite ISD
Mesquite, TX
Pre-K-12 School District
38,000 Students
50 Campuses
Laura Jobe
Executive Director of Communications
Sabreana Smith
Director of Strategic Communications
Elizabeth Fernandez
Director of Communications & Marketing
Aaron Libby
Graphic Arts Coordinator
The world of work is changing rapidly, and so should the educational process. That’s the philosophy and vision that inspired Mesquite ISD Superintendent Dr. David Vroonland to propose the district’s first choice career high school. Industries and trades from manufacturing and logistics to healthcare to computer science are among the hot career fields anxious to secure a skilled workforce to meet their needs as soon as possible. In some cases, these employers are abandoning the traditional idea of requiring a college degree and focusing on hiring those who can prove their skills and aptitudes. Through a new innovative education center—Vanguard High School (VHS)—MISD aims to prepare our students with a tailored education and real-world experience that will launch them confidently and directly into the workforce or higher education.

In 2018, the district’s five traditional high schools were at or nearing capacity. Additionally, development was underway on nearly 4,500 lots situated in the southern sector of the MISD attendance zone. In February, an MISD committee unanimously recommended a new bond package with the top priority of building a new choice high school. MISD voters approved a $325 million bond in May of 2018, giving the district the go-ahead to begin design and construction.

After the passage of this bond program, MISD’s campaign to share the benefits of the choice career high school continued through multiple marketing and PR channels. These included news media coverage such as TV reports and print articles, social media mentions and more leading up and setting the stage for the phased marketing program.

Some of the key messages:

- VHS is a school of choice serving students in any Mesquite ISD attendance zone interested in a non-traditional high school experience.
- VHS will immerse students in a career field that fuels their passions or curiosity.
- While earning their high school diploma, students will also earn certifications, explore internships and build portfolios of work that will allow them to secure well-paid employment right out of high school or build a solid foundation for further study in college, trade school or the military.
- Students can choose from 16 different programs of study and earn multiple industry certifications and dual credit.
- The campus will open in the fall of 2021 with 500 freshmen and 500 sophomores organized into four schools based on their selected program of study.
- The campus will eventually be home to 2,000 students in grades 9-12.

16 PROGRAMS OF STUDY

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
CONSTRUCTION
TECHNOLOGY
AUTOMOTIVE COLLISION
AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY
ENGINEERING
ROBOTICS
LOGISTICS
FIREFIGHTER
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN
PHARMACY TECHNICIAN
MEDICAL TECHNICIAN
THERAPY OCCUPATIONS
MEDICAL ASSISTANT
DENTAL ASSISTANT
COMPUTER SCIENCE
GRAPHIC DESIGN
According to statistics from the 2018-2019 school year, more than half of MISD’s 40,000 students are at risk for dropping out, and nearly 80% received free and reduced lunch. Our Superintendent, Dr. David Vroonland, believes that our students from economically disadvantaged households would greatly benefit from the opportunity to be prepared for high-wage, high-demand jobs right out of high school, and/or earn college credit through dual-credit courses.

Thanks to a 2017 voter survey to collect insight before the 2018 bond, it was discovered that the Mesquite ISD community believes that MISD was ready for a choice career high school. Response to this sentence—“offering students more choice in their education by expanding career and technology programs to prepare them for jobs right out of high school”—received a 93% approval rate. Only 3% disapproved and 4% were unsure.

To research options before building the plans for VHS, Dr. Vroonland and several other Mesquite ISD administrators and educators toured other non-traditional career high schools in the DFW Metroplex in Garland ISD, Grand Prairie ISD and Plano ISD to mention a few.

Further research was conducted with results to support the viability of VHS in Mesquite ISD.

Mesquite ISD is a district rich in athletic tradition, but sports aren’t the only extracurricular activities the schools are known for. For seven consecutive years, MISD was honored on the NAAM Foundation’s Best Communities for Music Education list, a distinction for only 4 percent of districts across the nation. So would the MISD community be open to a school like Vanguard without traditional extracurricular experiences for students?

In a 2017 survey, 68% of high school students currently enrolled in Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathways indicated they would be interested in attending a career-focused school without traditional extracurricular activities. (61% of students indicated they were not currently participating in these traditional extracurricular activities: athletics, band, cheer, choir, drill, orchestra, theatre and JROTC.)

- 91% of 8th grade parents indicated they would consider a choice high school that was not in their immediate neighborhood.
- However, when asked if their answer would be the same if traditional extracurricular activities were not offered, only 38% indicated they would still be interested in a choice high school for their child. (62% of parents would change their answer.)
- Dean of Vanguard and communication director conducted student focus groups with potential students (held virtually) to find out what they wanted to know about Vanguard.
CTE-Focused High Schools Help Fill Employment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects six occupational areas to experience double-digit growth nationally between 2014 and 2024. Profiled schools offer programs in many of these high-growth areas.

Addressing the Language Barrier

26% of our students are bilingual/English as a second language. All Vanguard information and material were produced in both English and Spanish.

- Published a single catalog that contained English and Spanish
- Hosted Spanish Facebook Live to answer enrollment questions
- Ensured all electronic correspondence sent in the home language

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH PROJECTIONS
BY OCCUPATION 2014-2024

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Support Occupations</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Practitioners &amp; Technical Occupations</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care &amp; Service Occupations</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer &amp; Mathematical Occupation</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community &amp; Social Service Occupations</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Extraction Occupations</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, All Occupations</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Working closely with CTE staff and the Dean of Vanguard High School, the Mesquite ISD Communications Department selected a **phased marketing plan** with goals, strategies, tactics and measurements.

Refereed initially as a “choice career high school” but never its official name, a committee including MISD Board members created the name of Innovative Education Center. MISD’s Executive Director of Communication Laura Jobe quickly proposed—and garnered support for—a name that would be better suited to the campus’ concept and more exciting for its students: Vanguard High School.

After overcoming the name challenge, marketing to potential Vanguard students during the COVID-19 pandemic proved complicated and required creativity. In one fell swoop, the planned large-scale, in-person marketing opportunities such as a CTE Showcase and Transition Nights—annual events for students and parents for middle school students—went out the window. Campus visits by CTE counselors became limited as well.

The CTE counselors were still able to visit each middle school campus to talk to students about Vanguard; however at that time 60% of MISD students opted for virtual learning over in-person instruction. CTE staff only had an opportunity to visit in-person with 40% of eligible students.

To overcome the known concern about Vanguard not offering traditional extra-curricular activities, marketing messages included emphasis on the variety of student organizations and competitions available connected to their passion and career field.

**Phase 1:** Message and Content Planning (July - Aug. 2020)  
**Phase 2:** Marketing Implementation (Aug. 17 - Nov. 20)  
**Phase 3:** Enrollment (Oct. 1 - Nov. 20)  
**Phase 4:** Ongoing Engagement (ongoing)

**OVERALL GOALS:**  
- Enroll 1,500 students for 1,000 available seats (500 freshmen, 500 sophomores) in the 16 programs of study at Vanguard High School for fall 2021  
- Ensure stakeholders have an understanding of the VHS programs/opportunities and pathways  
- Increase awareness in the community about Vanguard High School and the value of the programs offered
PLANNING CONTINUED

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

- Families of incoming 8th-grade students
- Families of incoming 9th-grade students
- Families of future Vanguard students
- Middle school counselors
- High school teachers
- Secondary principals

SECONDARY AUDIENCE

- Mesquite business community
- Mesquite ISD residents
- Board of Trustees

IMPLEMENTATION

Spanish Facebook Live Presentation received positive feedback and resulted in 2,300 views.
Traditional New Media/Social

Embracing its new concept, leadership and even name changes as news pegs, media coverage garnered more than $10,000 in ad equivalency. Story links were also shared on Mesquite ISD’s social media channels to magnify the audience and elicit engagement. This community feedback helped shape talking points for the superintendent, videos and other marketing materials.

- What is it they love?: New Mesquite high school to focus studies on students’ passions; WFAA Channel 8, May 19, 2019
- **Mesquite Choice High School gets a name**, leader, Mesquite News, May 12, 2020
- **Introduction of new dean**, Mesquite News, July 16, 2020 (Readership: 1,681,849; Ad equivalency: $3.2k)
- **Vanguard High School is the new name**, DMN, July 29, 2020
- **Enrollment open for Mesquite ISD’s new Vanguard High School**, DMN, Oct. 7, 2020 (Readership: 1,681,849; Ad equivalency: $3.2k)
- **Telemundo feature on Vanguard**, September 18, 2020
- **Mesquite ISD Innovative Education Center’s new leader** blends industry with education, May 28, 2020, Dallas Morning News (Readership: 1,681,849; Ad equivalency: $3.2k; 498 Social Shares)
- **A New Concept for Mesquite**, Mesquite News, November 10, 2020

Print Advertising

- Designed Vanguard High School Catalog in English and Spanish
  - posted digital version online
  - mailed to all virtual learners
  - handed out at campuses to in-person learners
- Mailed two postcards to all 8th and 9th grade students
- Designed and printed set of pop up recruiting banner for CTE
- Printed posters placed in all secondary campuses and MS/HS counseling offices
- Vanguard purchased branded marketing items such as t-shirts, pens, mugs, keychains, etc.
- Mailed acceptance banner and welcome letter to the homes of students who were admitted
FIRST MAILER

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Vanguard High School students will have an opportunity to earn college credits, complete industry-based certifications, experience internships, and build relationships with local businesses. Vanguard students will be prepared to secure well-paid jobs right out of high school or build a solid foundation for further study in college, trade school or the military.

Vanguard students will have the opportunity to participate and compete at a wide variety of student organizations and activities at a local, state and national level, aligning with their career interests and passions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Contact your counselor or Dean of Schools
Clinton Ekesser
cfessers@mesquitelisd.org
972.662.8768

*Please note: All 9th grade students must have a complete or partial schedule. A counselor will be in touch to complete all paperwork on the student as a reminder to attend Mesquite ISD registration.

Beginning in October 2020, current Mesquite ISD eighth and ninth graders from any attendance zone will have the opportunity to enroll via Skyward.
Launched Vanguard High School Website on September 14, 2020

As of March 3, 2021:
- 5,722 visitors
- 8,266 sessions
- 20,890 page views
- 2.46 minutes average session duration
- 8.5% of audience Spanish

LAUNCHED VANGUARD SOCIAL ACCOUNTS
SEP. 15, 2020

@MISDVanguardHS
136,000 Impressions
166,000 Reach
811 Fans
Created promotional video to launch Vanguard Enrollment campaign
  • Over 20,000 views combined on Facebook and YouTube
  • Playing on video board at Varsity football games

Conducted Parent Facebook Live informational meeting in English and Spanish
  • 9,004 Reach and 263 engagements in English
  • 6,020 Reach and 170 engagements in Spanish

• Created how-to video in English and Spanish on completing enrollment request in Skyward
• Shared video updates of construction on VHS and MISD social
• Digital ad displaying at Town East Mall
• Series of social posts highlighting each of the 16 programs of study
• Sent Smore electronic newsletters to 8th and 9th grade parent emails
  • 10/2 "Now Enrolling" - 3,955 views
  • 10/15 Discover Logistics - 4,732 views
  • 11/17 Last Chance to Discover Vanguard - targeted list to all 8th and 9th grade parents of students who had not already enrolled 2,533 views
• VHS Dean posted a series of live and behind the scenes videos to Vanguard Facebook

• Created video spotlights for programs with low initial enrollment interest

**Construction Tech** - posted Nov. 11, 2020

**Logistics** - posted Nov. 3, 2020
RETRACTABLE BANNER

Displayed on campuses during CTE visits.
VANGUARD PROGRAM GUIDE

- digital version displayed on website
- mailed to virtual learners homes
- handed out in-person
DISCOVER MESQUITE ISD'S BRAND NEW CHOICE HIGH SCHOOL

Mesquite ISD is excited to announce the opening of Vanguard High School, the first choice high school in the district. Vanguard High School is located in the heart of the Mesquite area and offers a unique educational experience for students.

Vanguard High School is designed to meet the needs of students who are looking for a more personalized and enriching learning environment. The school offers a variety of programs and resources to help students achieve their full potential.

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Vanguard High School offers a comprehensive engineering program that prepares students for college and career in the field of engineering. Students will have the opportunity to take courses that will help them develop the skills needed to succeed in a variety of engineering disciplines.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCE

The School of Health Science at Vanguard High School provides students with the education and training they need to pursue a career in the healthcare industry. Students will have the opportunity to take courses that will prepare them for entry-level positions in various healthcare fields.

SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY

Vanguard High School's School of Technology offers students the chance to explore a variety of technology-related fields. From computer science to robotics, students will have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in the field of technology.

INSTITUTIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Vanguard High School is proud to offer a unique program that focuses on the development of leadership skills. Students will have the opportunity to participate in various leadership opportunities and build valuable skills that will serve them well in the future.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Discover a Future in Logistics at Vanguard!

Vanguard High School offers a Logistics program that provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in this rapidly growing field. Students will have the opportunity to learn about various aspects of logistics, including supply chain management, transportation, and inventory control.

ENROLLMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Vanguard High School is now accepting enrollment requests for the upcoming academic year. Parents interested in enrolling their child at Vanguard High School can complete the enrollment process online on the school's website.

Institutional and program-specific information, such as class schedules and available courses, can be found on the school's website. It is recommended that parents review this information carefully before making a decision about enrolling their child at Vanguard High School.

DISCOVER THE PROGRAMS OF STUDY AT VANGUARD

Institutional and program-specific information, such as class schedules and available courses, can be found on the school's website. It is recommended that parents review this information carefully before making a decision about enrolling their child at Vanguard High School.
INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- Created Google folder and resource document for counselors with FAQ and talking points about Vanguard
- Met with all secondary counselors to introduce them to the programs at VHS and train them regarding the impact on CTE pathways
- Conducted an online focus group with potential students to find out what messages will resonate with potential families
- Created public address announcements for middle school and sub varsity athletic events
- CTE counselors and Dean of Vanguard visited 8th and 9th grade English classes at all middle and high schools to talk to students about enrollment opportunities
- Used Google classroom assignments to connect with virtual learning students and share information about Vanguard

EVALUATION

1,528 total applications submitted

In the most popular programs there were nearly double as many applicants as seats available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Choice Program</th>
<th>8th Requests</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>9th Requests</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Design</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automotive Collision</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>Automotive Technology</td>
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<td>Firefighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
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<td>Health Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logistics</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robotics</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>895</strong></td>
<td><strong>486</strong></td>
<td><strong>633</strong></td>
<td><strong>461</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vanguard High School Website launched on September 14, 2020
5,943 Users
21,829 page views

Vanguard Social Media launched on September 15, 2020
811 Total Followers
645 Facebook
97 Instagram
69 Twitter

#DiscoverVanguard Posts on Vanguard Social Media
76 Unique Posts
135,390 Impressions
115,770 Reach
1,074 Engagements

MISD Social Media Campaign
31 Unique Posts
224,502 Impressions
4,591 Engagements

41% of parents indicated that they first learned about Vanguard from a digital, print or social media communication

Marketing Survey
Sent to 1,341 Emails
Collected from Student Applications to Vanguard
286 Responses

15 Campus Presentations
62% of students were face-to-face learners
48% of students were virtual learners

60% of parents selected the Vanguard catalog as the most helpful piece of information

4 Survey respondents gave a 4 star rating for material received about enrolling in Vanguard