Changes to public education that will improve access to foundational programs for all kids! Success lies ahead...

Enjoy the holiday season and thank you for your continued commitment to our NM kids!

— Maria Jaramillo
NMCEL President

One of my husband’s high school football coaches once said that, “Success happens when opportunity and preparation collide.” I can attest that the educators in NM are well prepared. I have watched in awe as educational leaders have traveled across the state to come together to create an educational plan that will positively support all NM students. With all our educational partners including our new governor-elect, Michelle Lujan-Grisham, we have the opportunity to make some positive changes to public education that will improve access to foundational programs for all kids! Success lies ahead...

Enjoy the holiday season and thank you for your continued commitment to our NM kids!

— Maria Jaramillo
NMCEL President

Clovis District Finds New Solutions Through Creativity and Collaboration

Rather than a tough approach and tightened belts, it is creativity and collaboration in the hands of an innovative thinker that are bringing change to Clovis Municipal Schools. Challenges are not unique to public school districts these days, and the landscape shifts from one day to the next. From administrators to support staff adapting to change, everyone is also faced with figuring out how to do more with less and continually improve student success.

It’s an environment that calls for a special kind of leadership. Of course, they have to be able to identify challenges, to provide solutions and make things happen, but now, more than ever before, it’s the way leadership approaches challenges that has the greatest impact.

Clovis Municipal Schools is no exception. Located in eastern New Mexico and serving roughly 8,000 students, on one hand, the district is a proud blend of railroad,
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Stan’s Straight Talk
STAN ROUNDS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Seasons Greetings!
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

The New Mexico Legislature (54th Legislature) begins its deliberations at noon on January 15, 2019 and ends at noon on March 16, 2019. This Session is the first one in almost 10 years that has significant opportunity to consider financing New Mexico Public Schools at a level that is needed to serve the needs of our students. A “new” House of Representatives will join an experienced Senate in proposing legislation that will affect our students for years to come. With a new Governor, and Secretary of Education, this proves to be an opportunity for us, as practitioners, to make our case for what is needed for our public school children.

So, I am asking that each of you become active in this process. I have spent much of November and December travelling around the state and meeting with you and your legislators to provide our “Policy Recommendations” and answer questions regarding them. I have encountered much support and some push-back. It is imperative that we speak with one voice and stay focused on our priorities. As I reviewed with many of you at our last Superintendents’ meeting on December 7, we expect to coordinate our efforts with you to have a presence in Santa Fe each day that there is discussion regarding public schools.

…become familiar with the website nmlegisl.gov.

It will be important that you keep up with the bills regarding public schools as they pass through the legislative process. To assist with this, I will be providing a periodic update on major legislation. However, you can become better informed by actively reviewing the legislation and the committee schedules yourself (daily). To do so, you should become familiar with the website nmlegisl.gov. The menu at that site will give you access to bills, analyses of the bills, committee schedules and an array of information that can assist you in being informed. You can find the numbers for your legislators and their email addresses, also.

Generally, the House Education and Senate Education Committees begin their work at 8:00 am on each Monday, Wednesday and Friday (if that changes, I will give you notice).

— continued on page 16

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...become familiar with the website nmlegisl.gov.

A master calendar will provide you with an opportunity to assure your schedule is well used. As a superintendent, or other school leader, you are called on to take many leadership roles at this time of year. This year, we need to make our presence in Santa Fe a priority.

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stan@nmcel.org
Jo Lynn Gallegos, Business Manager
jolynn@nmcel.org

NMCEL 6600 Palomas Ave., NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
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OFFICERS
(back row, left to right): NMSSA Past President Ricky Williams; Executive Director Stan Rounds; NMCEL Past President Erik Bose; (front) President-Elect Will Hawkins; President Maria Jaramillo; and NMSSA President Lillian Torrez.
Changing My Hair Do?
Terry Dean, NMASBO Executive Dir.

There are times in which I strongly resist changing my established practice. When I go to a familiar restaurant, I order the same thing almost ever time. For example, I like getting a breakfast burrito at Blake’s. I always get the #4 (the Classic) with green. I never vary my order. I already know I like it, so why should I get something else? There are those rare occasions when I allow myself to be persuaded to try something new. But, I usually don’t like it and I regret not getting my usual menu selection.

However, there are those situations where I accept the inevitable and embrace the change. A good example of that is my hair. Since graduating from high school, I had the same hair style; short, over the ears and parted on the left. Somewhere through the years, my genetic code became increasingly evident and a new hair style became apparent. So, I started “buzzing” the small quantity of hair that I had remaining. However, there are those times when I feel exceptionally daring and adventurous and I apply the razor to the stubble.

I tell you all this because I know that alterations can be good. In fact, the NMASBO Board has decided that it is time for a change. The adjustment is designed to improve the benefits provided to our members. We have started the process of implementing an Association Management Software package. There are many reasons why we have made this decision. The most prevailing are:

1. Improve the interaction of the members with each other;
2. Improve the flow of information without “blowing up” your email;
3. Improve the process of providing professional development documents to members;
4. Provide members access to their professional development transcripts for licensure; and
5. Provide the ability to create a resource library for the members.

Typically, any change like this may be met with some resistance. However, the NMASBO team is up for the challenge. We plan on rolling out the new platform immediately after the Spring Budget Workshop. Please know that we will be working on the implementation and we are confident the changes will be positive.

— Terry Dean
CEO, NMASBO
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Adopt a Legislator Program

H. Russell Goff, Executive Director, NMAER

In the early 2000’s, after NMAER became involved in a lawsuit against the Governor over the Retiree Health Care Authority, we realized that we needed to become more organized and more involved in our legislative efforts. During this time, our Legislative Committee began to address this issue. Two members of that committee, Jeannie and Phil Barck, organized the development of a program that we call “Adopt A Legislator” or “AAL” for short. The basis of this program is that members volunteer to be an AAL who will communicate with the Legislators on a weekly or bi-weekly basis on the issues being discussed during the Legislation Session.

The AAL program has provided a more consistent approach in our legislative efforts and allows for better communication with each legislator on our position(s) on bills of importance, but also lends an avenue for the legislator to communicate any concerns or questions back to us for better understanding. It also allows NMAER to involve retirees in this process. As we know, distances in New Mexico to Santa Fe are challenging, especially during the winter months. While it is important to visit our legislators during the session it is not always possible. This is a good way for retirees to volunteer their time to work on legislative activity.

In the last five years we unfortunately lost Phil and Jeannie. The Legislative Committee came to the rescue. In the place of Phil and Jeannie several retirees have stepped in to take over the leadership of the program. After making a few adjustments on how the program operated, retirees Wyley Mauldin, Terry Greer and Linda Carr, agreed to be coordinators and to assume leadership of the program.

The last two years Linda and Terry have assumed leadership of the program and work closely with the NMAER Executive Director to communicate our positions to the AAL’s and Legislators during the session. In recent days we lost Wyley Mauldin. We are indebted to him for his role in helping us to sustain the AAL program.

Survey Gives Insight Into School Boards and Priorities

Here’s a tidbit that may help you in a game of Trivial Pursuit: the average age of School Board Members nationally is 59; and, 40 percent of all Board members are retired. Not too surprising. But, did you also know that the youngest Board member in the nation is only 29? That’s according to the responses received in a survey conducted by the National School Boards Association in conjunction with K12 Insight.

Between November 2017 and February 2018, more than 9,200 e-mails were sent throughout the country asking for responses to a survey entitled “Today’s School Boards and Their Priorities for Tomorrow.” There were 1,031 responses received. Additionally, a public URL was distributed by state associations, which resulted in 411 additional responses. Responses were received from every state except Hawaii, and the District of Columbia. Periodically, the National School Boards Association conducts research to describe who is serving on America’s school boards and to understand the issues and priorities they have for their students in their districts, according to the NSBA website.

The survey results also found the following as the top issues that Boards face:

- Board members rated budget (95%), factors that impact student achievement (93%), and evaluation of superintendent and principals (92%) as extremely important or very important to effectively performing their board duties.
- The three most important approaches to improving student learning identified by participating board members are high-quality leadership (97% school-level leadership and 96% district-level leadership), engaging and relevant curriculum (96%), and aggressively recruiting qualified teachers (94%).
- When evaluating superintendent performance, participating board members rated effective working relationships with others (98%), student achievement (95%), and financial management (95%) as the most important factors.
- Participating board members rated the following items as not at all important to improving student learning: supporting the creation of new charter schools (75%), increasing school choice in the district (43%), and linking teacher pay to student performance (37%).
- However, 89% of participating board members agree or strongly agree that there is a need to emphasize the development of the whole child.
- Participating board members identified top barriers to their work as state laws regarding the hiring of non-traditional teachers (73%) and implementing state accountability systems (81%).

Click here to read the entire report.
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agriculture and military families; however, the community has a population faced with significant socio-economic challenges.

Typical and traditional responses simply aren’t enough in an environment of high socio-economic disadvantage, with industries such as military and agriculture that require high investment from families, along with the recruiting and retention issues that naturally follow.

Or, at least that is what Renee Russ will tell you. Since taking the position of Deputy Director of Federal Programs in the fall of 2016, Russ has made it her goal to look at every challenge in a new way and to do so with the help of as many other sets of eyes as possible. Collaboration, combined with innovative uses of federal funding, she believes, are key to accomplishing the impossible, which requires a change in the way educators look at things. Ultimately, Russ believes, navigating federal programs is about being a creator and facilitator who hands educators solutions they can take ownership of and run with.

Often, districts don’t consider federal programs for solutions; or, they have tried in the past, only to fall into a trap of not being able to mold their district to federal funding requirements, when what they actually need to do is find innovative ways to make it fit the needs of their district in a sustainable way. Add to that a tendency to filter their view to state and local resources or see limitations that don’t exist at the federal level, it is easy for districts to overlook the opportunities available through federal channels. It is all about perspective, Russ said.

For example, “You don’t have to be limited by SEG,” she said. “It’s just doing it a different way.”

One of the pressing issues Russ tackled first was introducing Domain Element Coaches (DEC) to lessen the loss of instructional coaches who had to fill gaps in the classroom due to teacher shortages. Teachers who are struggling are identified for targeted, job-embedded professional development and paired with teachers chosen to be DEC’s, based on successful performance ratings. Through this pairing, DECs are able to provide support for their peers while building instructional capacity and strengthening their own practices.

Another step taken to compensate for the loss of instructional coaches resulted from collaboration between Federal Programs, Instruction and Human Resources Departments to create a stipend program for Teacher Leaders in elementary through middle school. Teacher Leaders are chosen for their highly effective or exemplary performance. Their classrooms are considered model learning environments for other teachers to look to and they are also given targeted professional development and support so they can create successful learning labs to share with struggling or novice teachers.

When a self-audit revealed need for growth in service to English learners, Russ collaborated with several departments and the University of New Mexico’s Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies Department in efforts that ultimately led to the placement of English Learner Case Managers (EL Case Managers) at each campus in the district. Equipped with specialized training and backgrounds, EL Case Managers not only identify English learners and provide instructional and academic monitoring; they serve as instructional resources to colleagues and advocates for the English learners at their schools.

When the district launched a Turnaround Initiative in partnership with the University of Virginia, the idea of reassigning high performing teachers to struggling student populations surfaced. In response to concern over the negative effect forced transfers might have with teachers, Russ was able to combine federal funds to offer stipends to teachers willing to transfer from high performing to low performing schools. Through targeted transfer or extended commitment stipends, teachers can transfer for a period of two years or can commit to stay at schools where their history of high performance can do the most good toward improving teacher and student success with struggling populations.

—continued on page 10

Students, parents and teachers work together at Parkview Elementary School in Clovis to create Title I Student/Parent/Teacher Compacts. Change and solutions are most effective in the hands of stakeholders when they come together to creatively address issues, according to Renee Russ, Clovis Municipal Schools Deputy Director of Federal Programs.
Our staff all have successful experience in working and coaching in high-needs schools to improve student achievement.

NIET will work shoulder-to-shoulder with you to build capacity around the following strategies:

• Teachers leading their own development
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• Strengthening effective leadership—district leaders, principals, and teacher leaders
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For more information about NIET services, please contact: Patrice Pujol at ppujol@niet.org, or visit niet.org
Clovis District (cont. from p. 8)

Other ways of utilizing federal funds for direct impact and problem solving include the creation of Safe and Healthy School Coordinators, teachers tasked with improving the overall school climate, supported by evidence-based strategies, activities, and interventions to maintaining a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for students and staff at each middle school. Regular education social workers have been placed at each Title I elementary school, and a Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) & At-Risk Mentor program pairs trained volunteers with at-risk students or those returning to school from juvenile detention to help them overcome challenges and realize their potential.

A creative use of federal funds which Russ is most proud of, is family and community engagement that works directly to bring everyone to the table in pursuit of growth. Family Engagement liaisons have been added at each campus through a stipend program and this school year, a Family Engagement Assessment is underway. It's designed to take a deep and honest look at district practices and to give stakeholders a voice and hand in bringing about change.

In each instance, it has taken collaboration between district departments, stakeholder engagement, honest listening and an innovative look at available funding programs, to find ways to put federal dollars to work addressing real needs in sustainable ways.

When it comes to maximizing federal funding opportunities, the bottom line for Russ is collaboration from the moment an idea is born to celebrating its success. That shared ownership is something that takes on a life of its own, spreading roots across a school district and growing change from within.

—Sharna Johnson
Webmaster

From the administrative team of Superintendent Jody Balch

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Chronic Absence Snapshot: 15-Day Threshold

State Average = 17.5%

Ten Largest School Districts:
- APS = 22.4%
- Las Cruces = 24.7%
- Rio Rancho = 19.1%
- Gadsden = 6.7%
- Santa Fe = 20.2%
- Gallup-McKinley = 1.0%
- Farmington = 8.4%
- Roswell = 3.1%
- Hobbs = 27.2%
- Los Lunas = 19.9%


School Absences to be Weighed by NM Legislature

As reported in the November issue of The Advocate, legislation will be re-introduced in the 2019 session that will target poor student attendance and chronic absenteeism throughout the state. The “Attendance for Success Act” bill will have a holistic approach to support schools, students and families who all share the responsibility of attendance. Here is a chart that was recently provided to members of the Legislative Education Study Committee which shows the range of absences throughout New Mexico. The state’s 10 largest districts were listed separately for the lawmakers; the data was collected in 2015 by the US Dept. of Education.
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ATTENTION - High School Counselors & Principals:

The New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders (NMCEL) is pleased to announce a scholarship opportunity for seniors who will graduate in May of 2019. The NMCEL Board has generously allocated funding for two $3,000 scholarships to current seniors who will enroll in a college or university in the fall of 2019. The scholarships will be distributed in $1000 increments over three semesters if the recipient continues to be enrolled in college.

Attached for distribution are the criteria and guidelines for application. Applications are due no later than February 22, 2019. Note that preference will be given to applicants who are considering a major in the field of education whether it be teaching, counseling, business, HR, etc.

During the month of April, finalists will be interviewed in Albuquerque by a selection committee. A stipend will be provided for students who must travel further than 100 miles from Albuquerque. Recipients will be notified no later than May 6, 2019, and the scholarship will be awarded at the annual NMCEL conference in July.

Please distribute this information to your graduating seniors and encourage them to apply for this scholarship.

DEADLINE: FEB. 22, 2019

CONTACT NMCEL FOR MORE INFORMATION:
505-217-2345
or jolynn@nmcel.org

Click here for NMCEL 2019 Scholarship Packet

Scholarship Packet Includes:
NMCEL Scholarship Criteria
NMCEL Scholarship Award Guidelines
NMCEL Scholarship Application

Sincerely,
Julie Arnold
NMCEL Scholarship Lead Mgr.
President, NMSSPA

Jo Lynn Gallegos
Business Manager
NMCEL

The 1620 Scholarship

Dear Educators,

The Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Mexico is proud to announce its 1620 Scholarship. The monetary award is $1,620.

Qualifications:
• U.S. citizen and a resident of the state of New Mexico. Members of native pueblos or New Mexico tribes are included. OR • U.S. citizen related to a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants, New Mexico. Proof of Mayflower ancestry is not required.
• Plan to attend an accredited post-secondary vocational school, community college, college or university in 2019.

The application is on our web site: http://www.nmmayflower.org. Due date: March 1, 2019.

Please contact me with any questions.

Lorna Dyer
Scholarship Chairperson
Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Mexico
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For More Information, Contact:
Mary Anne Guy, Educational Partnerships
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Staying Current

Here are this month’s suggestions from Stan’s desk, computer and mobile device. Send your “Staying Current” suggestions to info@nmcel.org:

► WHAT’S ONLINE
HTTPS://WWW.NSBA.ORG/CGSS

Every school district is taking steps to be “green” and this website by the National School Boards Association offers many resources. There is data, FAQs, and toolkits on going green, having clean environments and ensuring our schools are safe for learning and teaching.

► FEATURED VIDEOS
QUESTIONS EVERY TEENAGER NEEDS TO BE ASKED

Opinions from students will always give us a new perspective. In this TedX talk, Laurence Lewars discusses how the world is not always a fair place and not everyone gets to live out their dreams, but should this stop our youth from dreaming? Early on teenagers have their dreams beaten out of them by life. This talk attempts to revive this lost dream in teenagers across the world.

► GOOD READS

“If you Don’t Feed the Teachers They Eat the Students!: Guide to Success for Administrators and Teachers”

Dr. Neila A. Connors presents practical tips to improve school climate, communicate with parents and students, teach to the standards, and make a difference in students’ lives. It’s an enjoyable, easy-to-read must-have book. Paperback $8-20; Kindle-$14.

Stan’s Straight Talk
(cont. from p. 3)

The work of the first 30 days of the Session is usually better paced than the last 30 days, with the last two weeks being a bit of a blur. Please stay in contact with your legislators and be looking for any “all calls” that I may ask for on a rare occasion. If I ask for an “all call,” I am going to ask you to make your way to Santa Fe, if at all possible, due to the significance of an issue.

While we are optimistic about the likelihood of significant increases in funding for our public schools, it is never a guarantee that all will proceed easily. The Senate is likely to be the “gatekeeper” as legislation moves forward and is likely to be more conservative in releasing funding as they pay particular attention to the sustainability of the funding over time. Such will be the case in the House Appropriations and Finance Committee where the first budget hearings will occur.

Please stay tuned and involved!

Best Regards,
Stan

Upcoming Events

NMCEL
Jan. 10: 8 am-noon, Annual Legislative Primer, State Capitol Bldg.
Feb. 14: 10 a.m. – 1pm, Exec. Board Meeting, NMAA Conference Rm.

NMSPA
Feb. 5-6: School Personnel Conf. at Embassy Suites, Abq.

NMSSA & NMSBA
Feb. 22, 2pm – 5 pm, El Dorado Hotel, Santa Fe

New Mexico Legislative Session
Jan. 15 – March 16, 2019
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AdvancED STEM Learning Event

*Expand STEM Teaching and Learning*

February 5, 2019
9:00 am- 3:00 pm

Location: Cooperative Educational Services
Albuquerque, NM

A strong STEM education is becoming increasingly recognized as a key driver of opportunity, and data show STEM knowledge and skills are critical for student success in the future.

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- create a culture that supports STEM teaching and learning
- develop a high-quality STEM program
- evaluate the effectiveness and impact of STEM programs

**Registration deadline:** February 1, 2019
Cost: $150 per person. A working lunch is included in the workshop fee.
Seats are limited to 35 participants.

Please contact Dr. Susanna Murphy at [smurphy@advanc-ed.org](mailto:smurphy@advanc-ed.org) for information about how to register for this professional learning event.
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**PARCC Linking Study - https://www.nwea.org/resources/parcc-linking-study/

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- School Furnishings Unlimited – Interior Furnishings
- Security Controls Integrated, Inc. – Security Systems
- SLA Management – Food Service Management
- STOVEN Construction – JOC
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NMCEL
New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders

OUR MISSION
The New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders (NMCEL) provides the effective foundation for proactive educational advocacy for public education in New Mexico.

OUR VISION
Our vision is that the New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders (NMCEL) membership is relied upon as the experts in the strategic guidance of educational policy and practice in New Mexico.