In this continuing series from the NMPED Language and Culture Division, Director Mayra Valtierrez provides an update on steps taken to provide greater opportunities for all of New Mexico's students.

In July 2018 Judge Sarah Singleton issued a decision in the Martinez and Yazzie Consolidated Lawsuit finding the state failed to meet its constitutional responsibility to provide an adequate and sufficient education for all students. In December 2018, Judge Singleton issued a final judgment and findings of facts and conclusions, outlining target areas where the state was deficient in serving New Mexico's students. Foremost in Judge Singleton’s findings was that New Mexico’s at-risk students, which include students from economically disadvantaged homes, students who are English Language Learners, Native American students, and students with disabilities, face obstacles other students do not, and that at-risk students can overcome these obstacles if given access to adequately funded programs proven to enhance academic achievement.

As a member of the New Mexico Public Education Department’s (NMPED) leadership team, the part of Judge Singleton’s findings that I value most is her conclusion that all New Mexico students not only can achieve but can achieve at high levels if given the opportunity. It means transforming our education system into one that is responsive to the diverse array of cultures and languages whose

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Los Alamos Schools Supporting Student & Staff Well-Being

At Los Alamos Public Schools, we believe that a student’s sound mental and physical health form the foundation for learning and developing healthy relationships to oneself, others, and the larger community. In addition, staff well-being is essential to providing safe and nurturing learning environments and in developing and retaining quality teachers, leaders, and staff members.

Because of these foundational beliefs, the Los Alamos Healthy Schools Initiative was created in 2016 as a result of the work of a Mental Health Task Force, a group composed of staff and community members, and the school board’s strategic plan which prioritizes student and staff well-being as one of its eight focus areas.

In 2018, the district created one big, audacious goal that ties in beautifully with the aim of the Healthy Schools Initiative: “Every child will discover and develop their unique strengths and thrive at the next level.”

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Mayra Valtierrez

Supt. Kurt Steinhaus
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Colleagues:

As I prepare this Straight Talk, the Legislative Session is half-way complete. The early indications are that public education and early childhood are the two highest priorities along with planning for the financial future of New Mexico. Legislation is moving through on the education front that continue K-5+ and Extended Learning (ELT), Increases At-Risk funding to a 0.3 factor, provides differentiated pay for teacher mentoring, finally finishes funding of elementary PE, continues enhanced funding of instructional materials, increases compensation for public school employees by an average 4% and an average 5% for instructional staff, continues to fund transportation in the manner it has in prior years, provides supplemental emergency funding at a higher level than this year (FY20), provides dual-credit materials at a 50% higher level than current year, and funds “big bucket” below the line funding in response to the request from the PED.

A considerable amount of consideration has been placed on the new Early Childhood Department and one bill has set up a quasi-permanent fund for the department without pulling from the Permanent Fund. Attention is being paid to the early childhood services and there is likely to be additional consideration for funding of those services.

Overall, for public education there is a 7.6% overall increase in funding. In the base for public school program cost the increase is at 6.1%, at this point. Still to be resolved is the issue of Impact Aid and the credits taken by the current funding formula. There appears to be a focus on reimbursing districts for some portion of these credits through a parallel funding process and not changing the SEG calculation process. There has been some consideration given to allowing all credits to be considered for this parallel process which would benefit all districts to some extent. More to come in this area.

Legislation is passing through that may fix the retired teacher substitute problem. The bills would set a 90-day layout period for retirement before a teacher could come back to substitute. They would be limited to no more than 90 days of substituting in a year and would be restricted to an income not to exceed $15,000. Retiree Health Care funding is also moving forward. The HAFC stripped an appropriation at the request of the RHCA and then approved the rate increase for employee and employer. Currently, employees pay 1% of their salary into the fund; this will rise to 1.17%. The employer is currently paying 2% match and will now pay 2.32%. This will assist solvency until 2050.

As things move forward, we will continue to send updates and post information on the website. I expect to see several superintendents at AASA in San Diego.

—Best Regards, Stan
**NMASBO Continuing to Address Your Needs**

**TERRY DEAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

What keeps you up at night? There are plenty of things to worry about. What about the direction of your District/Charter? Has the job and political pressures taken your eyes off the mission? What about cyberattack? If your district were to be “hit”, could you still make payroll? Think about your disaster recovery plan. Do you have a plan or has it been updated in recent years?

These issues are exactly why we host the NMASBO Winter Conference. This year it will be February 19-21 at the Embassy Suites in Albuquerque. For example, we have many sessions that focus on leadership and cybersecurity.

There is still time to preregister for the conference at [www.NMASBO.org](http://www.NMASBO.org). Online registration is open until February 7. However, if you miss the preregistration deadline walk-up registration will be available at the conference.

In addition, the registration for the Spring Budget Workshop (SBW) is currently open. The Workshop is scheduled for April 1-3 at Hotel Albuquerque. The NMPED is currently putting the agenda together and we will share that with everyone as soon as it is available. You can register for the SBW at [www.NMASBO.org](http://www.NMASBO.org).

**Terry Dean**

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**NMAA Classifications**

The New Mexico Activities Association Board of Directors approved the classification and alignment breakdown of its member schools for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years.


A summary of most changes made from the current two-year block can also be viewed on the website at [www.nmact.org/file/CA_Summary.pdf](http://www.nmact.org/file/CA_Summary.pdf).

For additional information, please contact Dusty Young, NMAA Associate Director, at (505) 977-5385 or dusty@nmact.org.
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Job Opportunity:

New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education is seeking an EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education

General Operations and Management/Board Governance: Works with Board to fulfill the organization’s mission.

- Responsible for overseeing the administration, programs and strategic plan of the organization.
- Key duties include fundraising, marketing, and community outreach.
- Responsible for leading NMABE in a manner that supports and guides the organization’s mission as defined by the Board of Directors.
- Responsible for communicating effectively with the Board and providing, in a timely and accurate manner, all information necessary for the Board to function properly and to make informed decisions.
- Follow existing NMABE Policies and Procedures and recommend revisions or new policies as needed.
- Adhere to NMABE Board Approved By-Laws.
- Follow all applicable federal, state and local rules and regulations.

Financial Performance and Viability: Develops resources sufficient to ensure the financial health of the organization.

- Responsible for fundraising and developing other revenues necessary to support NMABE’s mission.
- Responsible for the fiscal integrity of NMABE, to include submission to the Board of a proposed annual budget and monthly financial statements, which accurately reflect the financial condition of the organization.
- Responsible for fiscal management that generally anticipates operating within the approved budget, ensures maximum resource utilization, and maintenance of the organization in a positive financial position.
- Responsible for signing all notes, agreements, and other instruments made and entered into and on behalf of the organization.
- Pick up and deposit checks at least twice weekly
- Maintain the financial register
- Collect outstanding debts and follow up with schools/customer that are 30 days past due
- Meet with vendors/customers to keep abreast of the status of contracts
- Ensure all employment documentation is in order

Revenue Generation: Marketing, Fundraising, Partnerships

- Increase participation at NMABE events
- Provide Professional Services to generate additional revenue for NMABE
- Deliver services according to contracts with vendors
- Promote NMABE Services
- Advertise available Professional Development services
- Develop new services and programs

Organization Mission and Strategy: Works with board and staff to ensure that the mission is fulfilled through programs, strategic planning and community outreach.

- Responsible for implementation of NMABE’s programs that carry out the organization’s mission.
- Responsible for strategic planning to ensure NMABE can successfully fulfill its Mission into the future.
- Responsible for the enhancement of NMABE’s image by being active and visible in the community and by working closely with other professional, civic and private organizations. Plan and facilitate regional institutes and annual conference, including securing venues, negotiating contracts, and developing conference program.
Organization Mission and Strategy: (cont.)
- Contact vendors as necessary
- Increase membership and maintain membership database
- Provide technical assistance to members
- Create and maintain a system to gather feedback from members

Communications: Works with board and staff to ensure effective communication to the general public and to the membership.
- Respond within 48 hours to all request for information
- Maintain NMAE website and social media as necessary
- Market and promote NMAE at every opportunity
- Communicate with key stakeholders (NMPED, NMCEL, SBAC, DLeNM, etc.)
- Publish quarterly El Noticiario Newsletter, sent by email to members and posted to website
- Communicate with members and inform them on issues of interest or high priority
- Conduct needs assessment of members on possible new services and programs

Additional Duties - Other duties as assigned by the Board of Directors

Professional Qualifications Needed
- A bachelor's degree
- A working knowledge of Bilingual, Multicultural, English as a Second Language, and Indigenous Education.
- Transparent and high integrity leadership.
- Experience with nonprofit organization, board or management.
- Experience and skill in working with a Board of Directors.
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- Ability to envision and convey the organization’s strategic future to the staff, board, volunteers and donors.
- Ability to effectively communicate the organization’s mission to public and political stakeholders, donors, volunteers and the overall community.
- Demonstrated ability to oversee and collaborate with stakeholders.
- A history of successfully generating new revenue streams and improving financial results.
- Active fundraising experience. Excellent donor relations skills and understanding of the funding community.
- Previous success in establishing relationships with individuals and organizations of influence including funders, partner agencies and volunteers.
- Solid organizational abilities, including planning, delegating, program development and task facilitation.
- Strong financial management skills, including budget preparation, analysis, decision making and reporting.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Strong public speaking ability.
- Strong work ethic with a high degree of energy.

Interested candidates should submit their resume or C.V. and a letter of interest to NMABE President, Carmelita Lee at clee@fms.k12.nm.us

The starting compensation of $30,000, is negotiable based on experience and skills. Additional options for discussion include: Travel expenses reimbursement, options for incentives, bonuses for increased sponsorships, and revenue sharing for professional services offered under NMABE.

Questions can be emailed to nmae.nm@gmail.com
Los Alamos’ Healthy School Initiative (cont. from p.1)

“From the very beginning” explains Healthy Schools Director Kristine Coblentz, “the intention of the initiative was to build upon the good work that was already happening in the schools while addressing the mental and physical health challenges our students and staff were facing. One of our greatest strengths is that our teachers are passionate and curious. They are aware of students’ needs and are implementing innovative programs in response to those needs.”

The next steps were to identify gaps and develop a comprehensive plan for implementation. It was quickly determined that focusing on ways to build resiliency and to strengthen social emotional skills were the primary objectives and would have the greatest impact on both students and staff.

As defined in an editorial article in *The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*, resiliency is not just the ability to bounce back, but the ability to face adversity and bounce forward, having learned and grown from the experience. According to CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), the five social emotional competencies are what allow us to deal effectively with daily tasks and life’s inevitable challenges. These competencies are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision-making

During the first three years, we have spent a lot of energy reaching out to staff by offering professional development opportunities to learn more about methods and models for developing these skills in themselves and sharing them with students. In addition, significant time has been spent with parents and community partners in order to establish a common language and common goals across the community.

One example of how we build staff and student skills is through Kognito, a mental health awareness and suicide prevention program. Kognito is an online role-play simulation that teaches people how to recognize the signs of distress, use conversations to approach the person and discuss concerns, and, if necessary, connect them with support. Nearly 300 training modules have been completed by LAPS staff and community members, while over 500 9th grade students have participated in the peer support training.

A second example is our partnership with the Albuquerque chapter of GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network). We have called on their experience and expertise to train staff to serve as Safe Space Resource People at each school site. Our goals are to provide support for students and staff who may experience bullying or harassment based on their identity and to ensure that schools are safe places for everyone.

Clear direction from the LAPS school board and administrators to invest time in developing sustainable strategies for supporting well-being has helped the initiative gain momentum. Identifying key strategies has been integral to focusing the initiatives’ efforts. The key strategies are as follows:

- Create systems that have district and community-wide impact to ensure sustainability.
- Build capacity at all levels including students, staff, parents, and community members, both individuals and organizations, to establish consistency, build skills, and share the responsibility.
- Strengthen connections recognizing that a sense of belonging is one of the strongest protective factors.

Building capacity at all levels requires collaboration with community supports. A crucial partner in this effort is the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB), a local non-profit that strives to help youth and families in our community feel connected, valued, and recognized. JJAB’s Resource Specialists work with school staff to help families connect to services, find the support they need, and assist with overcoming barriers to seeking or receiving services. LAPS staff and students serve on the JJAB board in order to strengthen this partnership and contribute to the planning of community programs and services.

--- continued p. 10
Los Alamos (cont. from p.9)

Los Alamos Public Schools benefit from the support of an engaged community that values education and a school board that has taken this bold, forward-thinking approach to addressing the challenges before us. Many of the emerging trends are reflected in national data, so we are not alone in our attempts to find effective, sustainable supports for our students, staff, and families. A few of the most important lessons learned are:

- Establishing an effective program takes time and a multi-year, sustained effort.
- Engaging all stakeholders is a key to success.
- Significant progress may require challenging norms and doing the patient work of culture change.

For all of the above to happen, strong school board and administrative support is crucial and at LAPS we are fortunate to have both.

—Dr. Kurt Steinhaus, Superintendent
—and
—Kristine Coblentz, Healthy Schools Director

Update From NMPED (cont. from p. 1)

home is New Mexico. The need for this transformation is immediate, but the work to achieve it will take time. The good news is that much of the groundwork was put in place in 2019.

Much of the work done so far has been accomplished with the input and support of the Hispanic Education Act Council and the Indian Education Act Council, as well as the PED’s Secretary’s Teacher Advisory, Family Cabinet, and Civic Council. Moving forward, the NMPED intends to continue to engage with stakeholders across the state and across New Mexico’s various cultural and linguistic groups.

In October 2019, the NMPED asked districts and charters to begin the work of forming Superintendent’s/Executive Director’s Equity Councils. These councils are to serve as think-tanks for advising districts and charter schools on addressing the local-level obstacles facing underserved students. Equity councils will consist of district and charter staff, students, families and community members, and are to be reflective of local demographics, giving special consideration to the representation of the student groups identified in the decision.

Currently, nearly every district and charter school in New Mexico has an equity council in place. In the coming months, the NMPED will be asking equity councils to complete a Martinez/Yazzie readiness assessment, which will foster conversations about programs and services that districts or charter schools have in place to support students. The readiness assessment is a tool districts and charter schools use for gathering information and identifying areas for improvement. The data collected in the readiness assessment is for districts and charters to use in making decisions around how to best serve their students.

The shared perspective here at the NMPED is that we have been mandated with perhaps one of the greatest opportunities. There is a common understanding that all of us together will play a role in accomplishing what has been set in front of us – which is the transformation of New Mexico’s public education system into one that ensures all students in New Mexico are engaged in a culturally and linguistically responsive educational system that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs.

—Mayra Valtierrez, Director
NMPED Language and Culture Division
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Let Us Introduce…

Throughout this school year, the Advocate is featuring new superintendents throughout the state. The leaders are new to the profession, to their position or to their district.

• RENEE RUSS is the Superintendent of the Clovis Municipal Schools. Ms. Russ is a veteran educator with 28 years of educational experience. She served as the Clovis Schools' Deputy Director of Federal Programs from 2016-May, 2019, the Director of Human Resources from 2015-2016, the Director of Instruction from 2012-2013, and principal of Ranchvale Elementary School from 2011-2012 and 2013-2015. Prior to coming to Clovis, Ms. Russ served as a teacher, principal, Curriculum and Learning Coordinator/Director of Federal and Bilingual Programs, and Dean of Instruction/Instructional Coach in the Moriarty-Edgewood (1990-2009) and the Albuquerque Public School districts (2009-2011). She grew up in eastern New Mexico and is very proud of her rural heritage. She earned a bachelor's degree from Eastern New Mexico University, a master's degree from New Mexico Highlands University, and was a recent participant in the "Aspiring Superintendents Academy".

To contact her: renee.russ@clovis-schools.org

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The Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Mexico is proud to announce its 1620 Scholarship for 2020. 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.
- Applicants must also plan to attend an accredited post-secondary vocational school, community college, college, or university in 2020.

Application is on our web site: [http://www.nmmayflower.org](http://www.nmmayflower.org).

**Due date: March 2, 2020**

Please contact me with any questions. Note: If you have questions from February 16 - March 1 please call Frankie Ewing at 505-764-8704. Leave a message and she will return the call.

**Lorna Dyer**  
Scholarship Chairperson  
Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of New Mexico  
LornaVDyer@aol.com  
505-820-1778

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**NMCEL SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE FEB. 21**

The deadline for the New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders scholarships is just days away. Seniors across New Mexico are encouraged to apply. **Applications can be submitted no later than February 21, 2020.**

NMCEL will award **two** $3,000 scholarships to NM high school seniors who will be entering a college or university. NMCEL Business Manager JoLynn Gallegos said the following **criteria for candidates are:**

- They must be a graduating senior from any public high school in New Mexico;
- They must have a GPA of 3.0 or better;
- Preference will be given to those entering the field of education. (This includes teacher, counselor, School Business Official, etc.)
- Interviews with each of the top five candidates will be conducted by a Selection Committee in April. The finalists must submit an Official High School Transcript prior to their interview.

**The Application Process**

1. The Scholarship Application Form must be completed and must be signed by a high school official;
2. Two letters of recommendation from teachers and/or school administrators must be submitted;
3. A typed essay (a minimum of 300 words) outlining the student’s reasons for entering the field of education must be submitted.

**There are a number of guidelines and criteria that students should read here.** In addition, the application form and other information about the scholarship is also on the NMCEL website: [www.nmcel.org](http://www.nmcel.org)

Application packets can be emailed (preferred method of submission) to: jolynn@nmcel.org

Or, the packets can be mailed to:  
NMCEL Scholarship  
6600 Palomas Ave. NE  
NMAA Building  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Contact JoLynn with questions: 505-217-2345 • jolynn@nmcel.org
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

K-12 RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO PROMOTE CENSUS

Pre-K, K-12, and ESL materials are available online for teachers and schools that are asked to support an accurate census count. The outcome has a direct impact on federal funding earmarked for public education.

▶ FEATURED VIDEOS

GETTING AN ACCURATE COUNT – 2020 CENSUS

This is a short, fun and animated video that builds on a simple concept of counting to help explain the 2020 Census and its importance. Show this video from Statistics in Schools — perfect for elementary and middle school levels.

▶ GOOD READS

FOUR HATS OF LEADERSHIP: BE WHO YOUR PEOPLE NEED YOU TO BE

Drake E. Taylor writes an easy to follow book that is particularly helpful to new superintendents/administrators. It’s clear and concise and will help you boost your leadership style and skills. His experience actually started in the military. This book will help you draw out the best from your staff.

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- Nook - $7.00

Upcoming Events

NMCEL & NMSSA
Feb. 26: Executive Board Mtg., 10am – 1pm, NMAA Conference Rm. A
Feb. 21: NMCEL Scholarship Applications due by 5pm

NMAA
Feb. 13-15: NMASC State Conference
Feb. 20: Board of Directors Meeting
March 3: NMAA Annual Foundation Board Meeting

NMASBO
Feb. 19-21: NMASBO Winter Conference, ABQ Embassy Suites

NMCASE
March 2: Spring, 2020 Member Meeting; Embassy Suites, ABQ

Presidents’ Day: Feb. 17
Legislative Session: Ends at noon on Feb. 20

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Girls Who Code – Schools Assisted with Creating Clubs

Schools are offered free curriculum to start their own “Girls Who Code” clubs. There are approximately 112 such clubs in New Mexico. Regional Partnership Coordinator Ngan Pham will assist in getting your schools the free computer science programs. Girls Who Code Clubs provide free plug-and-play curriculum and resources for educators to encourage girls’ participation in STEM. In each club, 3rd-5th and 6th-12th grade girls build life skills as they join supportive peers and role models and learn how to use computer science to positively impact their community. Students also learn about inspiring female role models in tech to help increase female representation in STEM programming.

Schools simply need the space to host the Club, computers and internet, and an adult (18+) to help facilitate the Club. Girls Who Code will take care of the rest. Clubs are led by facilitators, who can be teachers, computer scientists, librarians, parents, or volunteers from any background or field. The Girls Who Code program provides everything needed to get started including:

- Flexible, easy-to-use curriculum for students of all skill levels
- Weekly lesson plans and logistics resources
- A designated virtual Club Success Specialist to help you all along the way
- Free t-shirts for everyone (clubs must launch with at least 3 students)
- A mini-grant of $300 for snacks, supplies, or anything else to help make the Club successful once a minimum of 3 students are enrolled.

To access the free curriculum, visit the Girls Who Code Clubs website and click “Start a Club” to fill out the application. Once approved, schools can access the curriculum and be assigned a virtual Girls Who Code Club Success Specialist. If you want to learn more before applying, take a look at this step-by-step guide on how to start a Girls Who Code Club.

[APPLY TO START A CLUB HERE]

Questions? Contact Regional Partnership Coordinator, Ngan Pham, at thuyngan.pham@girlswhocode.com.

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Rosalind Esquibel
School Specialist
505-243-5263 ext. 216
505-450-3694 cell
resquibel@mccomassales.com

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.