Farmington Municipal Schools Named Apple Distinguished Program

Robert Emerson, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services and Charles Thacker, Director of Technology, have been leading technology efforts in Farmington Municipal Schools since the mid-1990’s. Their vision for 1-to-1, 24/7 learning for their students began in 2001. This vision became a reality in 2008 through establishment of the Farmington Learning Initiative (FLI). Principals, teachers, students and parents were now ready for 21st Century Learning.

As a result, Farmington Municipal Schools has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished Program for its Farmington Learning Initiative (FLI), a 1-to-1 laptop program. This honor is reserved for programs that meet criteria for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence, and demonstrate Apple’s vision of exemplary learning environments.

“This is a remarkable achievement that recognizes not only the hard work of our technology staff, but also honors the dedication of our school leaders and teachers. It validates the long-term commitment of our community and the Farmington Municipal School Board to improving student learning through the use of technology. The selection of Farmington Municipal Schools as an Apple Distinguished Program highlights our success as an innovative and compelling

Continued on page 8

REMINDER! REMINDER!

2014 NMCEL Scholarships

Applications for the annual NMCEL student scholarship are due in the NMCEL office via email no later than February 14, 2014. Two scholarships of $3,000 each will be awarded to two students who will graduate in May 2014. Application forms have been sent to all high school counselors and are available on the NMCEL website.

Please encourage your students to submit an application before the February 14 deadline.
From the Executive Director

Dear Colleagues:

The 30-day session of the legislature is underway and to date, more than 300 bills and more than 50 memorials or resolutions have been introduced. Remember that this is the session that deals only with the budget and those bills deemed germane for this session are the ones most likely to be heard during the session.

Although the session just got started on January 21, several committees began meeting several days before that. A meeting pertinent to our districts was the joint meeting of the House Education and the Senate Education Committees. On one of their meeting dates, several education entities, commonly referred to as the ‘Partners’ group, presented collective and individual legislative platforms. (Ours is located elsewhere in this newsletter.) Every education group made the same requests: Allocate more money into the education budget, place that money above the line so superintendents and board members can make the best decision for the children of their district and invest in Human Capital by providing raises to all employees and raising teachers’ beginning salaries.

We have seen the drafts of the three education budgets fondly referred to as “the dueling budgets” which have been proposed by the Executive, the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) and the House Education Committee (HEC) or House Bill 3 (HB3). Both the LFC budget and HB3 reflect many of the requests from the education partners, however HB3 provides even more assistance to districts by allocating money for insurance and funding to increase the minimum salaries for Level I, II and III teachers.

Every district’s superintendent has a copy of all three budgets if you’re interested in reviewing all the details. HB3 was just heard in HEC on Monday, January 27 and still has a long way to go, as do the other budgets, before we know for sure what districts can count on for next year. At the onset, however, it is clear that many legislators have been listening to superintendents, board members and teachers. HB3 reflects our legislative requests.

I urge you to contact your legislator and let them know how important it is to maintain the bulk of the new money above the line so that districts can make the best decisions for their students, not only this year, but in the future as well. I hope that you will join me in Santa Fe to not only observe the proceedings, but to get involved in speaking with our lawmakers. Remember that legislators work for us, the citizens of this state. Educators make up a large part of the state’s citizens. Make your voice heard.

On Saturday, February 1, HEC will meet again solely for the purpose of hearing from educators. When they conducted their meeting on Saturday, January 25, the majority of the educators who spoke were from Santa Fe and Albuquerque. I hope that educators from other districts will also come to Santa Fe and express their ideas, concerns and thoughts regarding schools and education in New Mexico. Thank you for all you do to for the children of New Mexico.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gloria Rendón
Executive Director
NMCEL New Website Launched

Hopefully you have had a chance to explore the NMCEL website and some of the new features. If not, this may be a good time to see what there is to offer.

The website uses sliders (changing image panels that slide across the homepage). Important information and links are included on these sliders, so you may want to make sure that you wait for all five sliders to go through rotation before you move on to another area. We are trying to keep these current, so they are changing on a regular basis.

There are menu items at the top of the page and also on the right sidebar. Our Executive Director’s monthly article Rendon’s Reflections is on the homepage, as well as, a message from Dr. Crit Caton, Board President.

Several new administrative vacancies have recently been added and we expect these to increase in the coming months. You may access these by using the right side bar item titled Employment.

Access to Legislative Priorities and Dr. Rendon’s 2014 Legislative Updates are also now available through the Legislative Slider or the right menu item, Legislative Updates.

Information on our Annual Conference Speakers and links to registration for the conference and the hotel group rate are now up and running on sliders.

As always, we would like to have your input. Please email carol@nmcel.org.

www.nmcel.org

NMCEL Board Scheduled to Meet February 6

February 6, 2014 Proposed Agenda

- Call meeting to order
- Approval of Agenda
- Introduction of Board Members/Recognition of Affiliates & Announcements
- Discussion Items:
  - Legislative Update
  - 2014 Scholarship Process Update
  - 2014 Summer Conference Update
  - Website Demo
  - Mid-year Budget Review
- Action Items:
  - Approval of Minutes
  - Approval of Financials
- Reports:
  - Reports from Affiliates, Executive Director & Staff

Affiliates

- New Mexico School Superintendents Association (NMSSA)
- Albuquerque Public Schools Principals Association (APSPA)
- Alliance for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning (NMSU)
- Cooperative Educational Services (CES)
- Eastern New Mexico Educational Resource Center (ENMERC)
- New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA)
- New Mexico Association of Bilingual Educators (NMABE)
- New Mexico Educational Retirees Association (NMAER)
- New Mexico Association of Elementary School Principals (NMAESP)
- New Mexico Association of Secondary School Principals (NMAASSP)
- New Mexico Association of School Business Officials (NMASBO)
- New Mexico Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NMAASC)
- Phi Delta Kappa (NMPDK)
- New Mexico School Personnel Association (NMSPA)
- New Mexico Society for Technology in Education (NMSTE)
- Regional Educational Cooperatives Association (RECA)
- Southeastern New Mexico Educational Resource Center (SNMERC)
- New Mexico Council of Administrators of Special Education (NMCASE)
NMCEL Announces the 2014 Summer Conference

July 23-25, 2014 • Hotel Albuquerque

The New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders is pleased to announce the keynote speakers for the 2014 Summer Conference — David Weber and Alan Blankstein.

Dave Weber will kick off the summer conference on July 24, the first day of the conference. For over 25 years Dave Weber’s high energy and entertaining style have made him one of the country’s most sought after speakers. From the most well respected corporations in the world, to middle schoolers, Dave delivers an infusion of life into any event. As a captivating presenter and phenomenal story teller, Dave has discovered that laughter opens the head and the heart to consider internalizing new principles.

Dave strongly identifies with the challenges of those in the audience. His goal with every presentation is to motivate, challenge and inspire everyone who hears him; and to have fun along the way. Dave stakes his reputation on change…

- changed perceptions,
- changed attitudes,
- changed behaviors
- changes lives!

In addition to motivational speaking, Dave is the author/creator of the Life Time Organizer and the author of the best selling book Sticks and Stones: Exposed: The Power of Our Words. He is President and CEO of Weber Associates, Inc., a training and speaking firm in Atlanta, Georgia.

On the second day of the conference, July 25, Alan Blankstein will present on creating a school culture that breeds successful students. Alan Blankstein is the author of Failure Is Not an Option® (Corwin Press, 2004) and 9 volumes of the Soul of Educational Leadership series.

Alan, a former “high risk” youth, began his career in education as a music teacher and has worked in youth-serving organizations since 1983, including March of Dimes, Phi Delta Kappa and Solution Tree, which he founded in 1987 and directed for 12 years. He is Founder and President of the HOPE Foundation (Harnessing Optimism and Potential through Education), a

Continued on page 6
To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.

NMCEL, NMSSA, NMSBA Legislative Priorities
2014 Legislative Session

The New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders (NMCEL), the New Mexico School Superintendents’ Association (NMSSA) and the New Mexico School Boards Association (NMSBA) are committed to improving education for all New Mexico’s Public School students. Each Association provides an effective foundation for proactive educational advocacy for public education in New Mexico and leadership to promote exemplary educational opportunities for all students. Our memberships urge the 2014 Legislature to address the funding concerns of New Mexico’s school leaders who are directly responsible for student success. We urge the Legislature to use their influence to provide appropriate funding for education in New Mexico by:

- Allocating no less than 50% of new money to education.
  - Increase the unit value to at least $4,000. Place all new money above the line.
- Eliminating the need for emergency supplemental funding.
  - Provide additional funding in the SEG to ensure each district is funded sufficiently, thus eliminating the need for requests for emergency supplemental funding.
- Increasing and adjusting the New Mexico Teacher pay scale.
  - Our organizations recommend a work group to bring forward recommendations for creating a new salary schedule.
- Rejecting all unfunded mandates.
  - Provide school districts the time, skills and resources needed to implement new initiatives.
- Increasing Funding for Education.
  - Allow the people of New Mexico to have a say in the level of distribution of the Land Grant Permanent Fund.

The NMCEL, NMSSA and NMSBA Legislative Priorities document in the original format is located on the NMCEL website on the Legislative Updates slider. Information on this page has been reformatted for optimum use of space within this newsletter.
NMCEL Announces the 2014 Summer Conference cont’d.

Continued from page 4

not-for-profit organization, the Honorary Chair of which is Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The HOPE Foundation has a more than decade-long track record of helping leaders create school cultures where “failure is not an option” for any student.

SAVE THE DATE

NMCEL Summer Conference
July 23–25, 2014
Hotel Albuquerque
Conference and Hotel Registration
on NMCEL website

Consider submitting a Presentation Proposal.

Additional information will be available
on the website after February 17, 2014.

AASA Connect, or “Where School Leaders Link to Success,” is an informative and accessible online resource that offers insight and reaction to contemporary issues facing our nation’s school administrators.

From success stories to member blogs and latest expert advice on the most difficult issues, experience this online community by going to: www.AASAconnect.com for more information.

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Cathy Carr
602.284.1514
carr@amplify.com

Eric Howey
972.341.1394
ehowey@amplify.com

Amplify insight.
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January 21   Opening Day (noon)
February 5   Deadline for introduction of bills
February 20  Session Ends
March 12     Legislation not acted upon by Governor is pocket vetoed
May 21       Effective date of legislation not a general appropriation bill or carrying an emergency clause or other specified date

http://www.nmlegis.gov

Refer to the **NMCEL website** for Legislative Updates from Dr. Gloria Rendón, NMCEL Executive Director.

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**NMCEL Remembers Dedicated Educator**

NMCEL Executive Board and staff extend their condolences to the family of Jack Bobroff on his passing in January.

Mr. Bobroff was a dedicated educator whose career spanned from teacher and principal to superintendent of the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) (1988-1994). He was best known for his ability to lead and work well with others, as well as, instituting school-based health centers in the Albuquerque School District. He also served on the Board of the New Mexico Educator’s Federal Credit Union.

His daughter, Kara Bobroff, is the founder and Principal of the Native American Community Academy (NACA) in Albuquerque.

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"I think the computers are a great asset to our school. . .and make learning more than just assignments out of a textbook." - mm 12th

"...Can't I keep it [laptop] for the summer?" - ks 7th

"I spent hours on this project and I really enjoyed it." - tm 8th

"I...love being able to learn new things on it [computer]. . .I hope to someday be able to have a career using Photoshop. . .to become a Graphic Designer. The fact that we are provided with computers gives us a great opportunity to learn things in a more advanced way."

- mb 12th

Farmington Municipal Schools Named Apple Distinguished Program cont’d.

Continued from page 1

learning environment that engages students and provides tangible evidence of academic accomplishment," said Robert Emerson, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services. Farmington students use their MacBooks and MacBook Airs to conduct Internet research, to create curriculum-based presentations, including movies and music, to access online curriculum resources and e-books and to create sophisticated computer graphics and animations.

The Farmington Learning Initiative is a key strategy in Farmington Schools for improving student achievement through the use of technology. The FLI provides every secondary student with a laptop and provides teachers with technology equipment and professional development to provide students educational opportunities that allow them to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways and to prepare them to be successful citizens in the 21st Century. By giving students consistent access to technology, the result is higher student engagement, deeper and more complex learning, and improved performance on state standards and benchmarks.

Through sustained expansion of the program all middle and high school students are impacted. Mr. Emerson and Mr. Thacker continue to refine the vision of the FLI and work to accommodate the new demands of implementation of the Common Core Standards and the New Mexico Accountability systems without losing sight of the original goals of this initiative: Digital Equity, Improved Student Achievement, Enhanced Teaching & Learning, Implementation of 21st Century Skills.

"I absolutely could not teach without computers! The 1:1 laptop initiative offers me instructional opportunities I truly had never dreamed of. . .It is my job to offer them [students] as many opportunities as possible to be successful in as many ways as they can. . .I have had students go to the national competitions at the University of Maryland with winning iMovies they have created for National History Day. . .Computers have also turned my students into better writers." — Teacher

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NMCEL
- Executive Board Meetings:
  - February 6, 2014 (online)
  - April 10, 2014
- Board Retreat, June 2-3, 2014

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Upcoming Events

NMASBO
- Winter Conference, February 19-21, 2014, Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque
- International Leadership Conference, February 20-22, 2014, Orlando, FL
- Spring Budget Workshop, March 26-28, Hotel Albuquerque, Albuquerque

NMABE
- State Conference For Bilingual Education, April 23-26, 2014, Albuquerque

NMASSP
- 2014 National Conference, February 6-8, Dallas, TX

NMSSA
- Superintendents’ Meeting, February 14, 2014, Santa Fe

AASA
- National Conference, February 13-15, Nashville, TN

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On January 14, the staff and students in Roswell, New Mexico faced one of the horrors that every parent, child, teacher and administrator dreads may happen in their community. There was an outpouring of support for the Roswell community. Please continue to keep this community in your thoughts and prayers. The following is an open letter from Superintendent Tom Burris expressing his gratitude for the support he and his district have received.

NMCEL

As we continue to share thoughts and prayer for our Berrendo students I wanted to take a minute and extend a heartfelt “Thank You” to the Superintendents, Legislators and others in the education community for their support. Also, we would like to express a special “Thank You” for the support and encouragement that we received from Governor Suzanna Martinez and Secretary of Education, Hanna Skandera. Both spent three days in Roswell visiting with staff, students.

The last week has been very emotional for so many who have supported Berrendo Middle School. One of the students is home and in the company of her family. The other is still in Lubbock. I spoke with his father and he said his son sat up in a chair for over two hours Monday. His progress is nothing short of miraculous.

We have seen wonderful community support and outpouring of concern. BULLDOG STRONG is seen all across Roswell. While it will be some time before we know all of the stories of heroism from January 14, 2014, let me say that there were many. Every staff member displayed the best of the profession. The staff who came to Berrendo Middle School the morning of January 14, 2014 are a different staff than those who finished the week. They are a team like no other, forged by circumstance and tested by adversity.

There are many individuals and organizations who wish to contribute funds for the families. We are working with United Way to collect these funds. We have a guarantee that 100% of the funds will be given to the families.

Thanks to each of you for support and encouragement. Have a great week and keep Berrendo staff and students close to your hearts.

Sincerely and with Appreciation

Tom Burris,
Superintendent Roswell Independent School District
Dan Domenech, Executive Director
AASA, The School Superintendents Association

Ever since the 2008 economic depression that gripped the country and school systems throughout America, we have been in a deep financial dive that has forced budget cuts in all areas. Many school systems are currently operating with budgets that are at pre 2008 levels. The Sequester certainly did not help and hardest hits were districts that, because of high poverty levels, were very dependent on federal funding. The districts that could least afford it were hit the hardest. Adding insult to injury, Congress took us to the edge of economic disaster resulting in a government shut down and the threat of our country defaulting on its debts.

Surprise, surprise: last month Senator Murray and Congressman Ryan reached a budget agreement that promised to do away with the continuing budget resolutions and would restore funding to almost pre-Sequester levels. Good news indeed but the question then became: how would the dollars be appropriated? AASA has been a staunch critic of the administration’s retreat from formula funding and the use of competitive grants to advance their education agenda. The administration’s budget proposals would continue that trend, adding more dollars to programs like Race to the Top while basically level funding formula grants like Title I.

On January 13 Congress released the details of how they intend to appropriate the dollars in the Murray-Ryan budget deal. Education dollars do not quite return to pre-Sequester level but they do get a significant bump from current funding. Furthermore, to our delight, Congress clearly favored formula funding over competitive grants. A victory for our advocacy efforts! Title I would be funded at $14.3 billion, an increase of $625 million over post-Sequester levels. IDEA will also see a bump up of $498 million. School Improvement Grants, however, will see no increase and Race to the Top will experience a $270 million cut.

The administration also suffered more than a financial setback with the School Improvement Grants. The omnibus spending bill would break with the current four-model option that would allow districts to propose another option that would be approved by the Department or they could adopt a whole school reform model.

Pre-school programs also come out as big winners in this budget. Head Start gets $1.025 billion above FY13 actuals. Given the importance of early childhood programs in tempering the impact of poverty on school achievement, this is clearly a step in the right direction helping to fund the President’s early childhood initiative.

While this omnibus bill is a step in the right direction toward resolving sequestration and directing federal investments towards programs that serve those most in need, we still have work to do. As the ink dries on this FY14 deal, we prepare to begin advocacy efforts for FY15 negotiations. The tough reality is that the Murray-Ryan deal already established the FY15 caps and there is very little room for increased investment, meaning that the funds we get this year are likely what we will get next year.
Teaching Readiness and Beyond: Addressing the Needs of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Featured Speaker:
Sylvia Diehl, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Department Head of 5050 - Communication Science & Disorders College of Behavioral & Community Sciences

Dr. Sylvia Diehl has thirty years of experience working with children with autism spectrum disorders. She received her Ed.S. as an interdisciplinary doctorate in Speech/Language, Learning Disabilities, & Reading and her Ph.D in Education. She is a faculty member in the department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of South Florida and teaches courses in the area of autism. She serves as a consultant to many school districts, the Florida Inclusion Network and has worked extensively with children with autism spectrum disorders and their families throughout her career. She has a recent book chapter titled "Supporting the development of literacy skills: Preschool through school-age" in the text, Language Difference and Development, and is a nationally known speaker in the area of ASD with over 70 presentations nationwide.

For more information, contact:
Felia Olivas
575-526-6682 or folivas@artkids.com

Download registration form online:
www.triunityconference.net