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NMCEL Hosts Legislative Primer

Each year, for the past several years, and just before the legislative session begins, NMCEL has offered a “Legislative Primer”. The Primer is offered to new Superintendents and our Aspiring Superintendents’ and Aspiring Principals’ cohorts. The purpose is to provide participants an opportunity to hear from two very important legislative offices—the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) and two prominent legislators. Staff of each of these Committees provides an overview of their work before and during the legislative session, as well as, information on committees and legislation to watch during the legislative session.

This year, Senator William “Bill” Soules (Senate Education Committee Vice Chair) and Representative Jimmie Hall (House Education Committee) spoke about the legislative process, including providing advice on how and when to talk to legislators. They discussed key issues and proposed legislation for this session, as well. Participants were able to interact with the legislators through discussion and a Q&A session.
From the Executive Director

Dear Colleagues:

This is our first newsletter in the new year and our first opportunity to wish all of you great success in the New Year!

As you all know, the Legislative Session began in earnest on January 19, and will continue through February 18. As is the case in a 30-day session, the purpose is to develop a budget for the next fiscal year. Only bills that are germane to the budget or receive a message from the Governor will move through the process during this 2016 session.

That doesn’t mean there won’t be hundreds of bills filed. In fact, more than 200 bills were pre-filed before the session began and many more will be filed before the February 3rd deadline.

The December issue of the NMCEL newsletter included the 2016 NMCEL/NMSSA platform which was also mailed to every legislator. As many of you know, for several years our two organizations have developed one platform which is shared with and supported by the NM School Boards Association. The goal is to present a platform that is supported by the leaders and decision makers in districts. This year we took a slightly different approach in the contents of the platform; rather than presenting a long list of needs and wants, the platform was used to point out the contributions school districts make in every community. So often, education is seen as simply taking resources from the state. In reality, schools are huge contributors to the community’s economy—through employment, through the purchase of goods and services and through partnerships. School districts are the life blood of the community, and we have several examples of what happens to communities when districts close down. The platform encourages legislators to include school district leaders in both economic development and plans to improve every aspect of our state. All districts throughout the state have smart and capable people who know how to roll up their sleeves to do the hard work of planning and implementing complex ideas. School leaders want to be included any time new initiatives are being contemplated. Our state can only improve and succeed when we find ways to work together and be more inclusive.

We are all concerned about our national standings and the great challenges we face, but we also know that working at cross purposes or marginalizing each other will not help our state. Our 2016 platform makes that point. As school leaders we don’t shy away from challenges and adversity and we welcome accountability; however, we can’t provide our best thinking if we don’t even have a seat at the table. I encourage each of you to visit with your legislator this year and instead of simply talking about what your district needs or wants, talk to them about what we can do together to improve our state. I hope to see many of you at the Capitol during the session. Please familiarize yourself with the new legislative website, watch the education committee meetings on the webcast, visit the NMCEL website for updates and stay informed about what is happening in Santa Fe.

Several districts will be holding bond elections in the next several months. So much of the time we focus on the great improvements that will be accomplished with the passage of a bond election. In keeping with the theme of our platform it might also be a good idea to remind communities about the number of jobs that are created or maintained with the passage of bond elections. When a bond fails, it is our children’s parents whose jobs go away.

Let’s all work with our legislators for a productive session. Our children are depending on all of us to make the best decisions for their future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gloria O. Rendón, NMCEL Executive Director
NMCEL Board Scheduled to Meet February 4

February 4, 2016  Proposed Agenda

- Request to call meeting to order
- Request to approve agenda
- Introduction of Board Members/Recognition of Affiliates & Announcements
- Discussion Items:
  - Legislative Update
  - Update on Specific Bills
  - Update on Scholarship Process
  - Conference Update
  - Update on Aspiring Principals’ Academy
- Action Items:
  - Request to approval Minutes of December 10, 2015
  - Request to approve Financials through January 2016
- Reports:
  - Reports from Affiliates
  - Executive Director
  - Leadership Coordinator
  - Office Manager Report
  - Legislative Report

NMCEL Executive Board and staff extend their condolences to the family of Ana-Maria “Nana” Encinias on her passing in December. Nana served on the NMCEL Board representing the New Mexico Association of Bilingual Educators.

From an early age, Nana was a passionate and devoted animal lover. She adopted quirky animals and loved the ones others ignored. She was involved with animal volunteer organizations and spent much of her free time working and training her dogs in order to visit hospitals and nursing homes and participate in agility competitions.

Nana studied at the University of Albuquerque where she earned a B.S. in Elementary Education (bi-lingual and ESL), an M.A. in Special Education and an Ed.S. in Educational Administration. She taught elementary school for thirteen years and worked her way up to principal and then into administration. She followed her father, Dr. Miguel Encinias’, work in championing bi-lingual, ESL and multi-cultural education in New Mexico. Her career spanned more than 40 years. She loved her job and continued to work despite her battle with breast cancer which began three years ago. She showed amazing strength and courage. The educational community has lost a loving and dedicated person.

Affiliates

- New Mexico School Superintendents Association (NMSSSA)
- 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 (NMAAA)
- New Mexico Association of Bilingual Educators (NMABE)
- New Mexico Association of Educational Retirees (NMAER)
- New Mexico Association of Elementary School Principals (NMAESP)
- New Mexico Association of Secondary School Principals (NMASSP)
- New Mexico Association of School Business Officials (NMASBO)
- New Mexico Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (NMASCD)
- 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 2016 Summer Conference
July 20-22, 2016 • Embassy Suites Hotel

The New Mexico Coalition of Educational Leaders is pleased to announce the keynote speakers for the 2016 Summer Conference — **Dr. Pedro Noguera and Eric Sheninger**

Pedro Noguera is the Distinguished Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA. Prior to joining the faculty at UCLA he served as a tenured professor and holder of endowed chairs at New York University (2003-2015), Harvard University (2000-2003), and the University of California, Berkeley (1990-2000).

He is the author of eleven books and over 200 articles and monographs and serves on the boards of numerous national and local organizations. He appears as a regular commentator on educational issues on CNN, MSNBC, National Public Radio, and other national news outlets.

His most recent books are “Excellence Through Equity” with Alan Blankstein, “School for Resilience: Improving the Life Trajectory of African American and Latino Boys” with E. Fergus and M. Martin, and “Creating the Opportunity to Learn” with A. Wade Boykin.

Eric Sheninger is a Senior Fellow and Thought Leader on Digital Leadership with the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE). Prior to this he was the award-winning Principal at New Milford High School. Under his leadership his school became a globally recognized model for innovative practices. Eric oversaw the successful implementation of several sustainable change initiatives that radically transformed the learning culture at his school while increasing achievement.

His work focuses on leading and learning in the digital age as a model for moving schools and districts forward. This has led to the formation of the Pillars of Digital Leadership, a framework for all educators to initiate sustainable change to transform school cultures. His main focus is purposeful integration of technology to facilitate student learning, improve communications with stakeholders, enhance public relations, create a positive brand presence, discover opportunity, transform learning spaces, and help educators grow professionally.

**SAVE THE DATE — July 20-22, 2016**

NMCEL Summer Conference

Conference and Hotel Registration

on NMCEL website.
NMCEL Welcomes Jo Lynn Gallegos

Please help us welcome the newest member of our staff, Ms. Jo Lynn Gallegos, our new Office Manager. Jo Lynn began with NMCEL on January 4th and has been busy familiarizing herself with all aspects of the organization. We are lucky to have found someone of Jo Lynn's caliber. Formerly, she worked with Dr. Peter Winograd, first as his Executive Assistant at the Office of Education Accountability under Governor Richardson’s administration and then as his Assistant when Dr. Winograd was the Director of the Center for Education Policy Research at UNM. Before that Jo Lynn worked at the State Department of Education with our good former colleague, Jim Ball. Jo Lynn has been busy earning her AA degree and is in the process of working toward a BA degree in Business. All of these experiences demonstrate that she is not new to the public education arena.

Jo Lynn joins us as we gear up for our busiest time in preparation of our summer conference. Luckily, she has extensive experience in putting together conferences and working with hotels and vendors. Her friendly demeanor and her competent skills make her an excellent choice for the position of NMCEL’s Office Manager. We look forward to many years working with her. Please join us in welcoming Jo Lynn to our organization; I know she looks forward to meeting and working with all of our membership.

Leadership is …

Connecting every day to your deepest and most enduring values.
The Educational Leaders of New Mexico are eager to assist in growing and improving New Mexico’s economy which can and will happen when we invest in preparing EVERY CHILD for their future in college and careers. A robust economy is the result of strong, effective public schools preparing EVERY CHILD for college and careers.

Educational Leaders are problem solvers and can help with solutions. They want to and can be part of the solution. The improvement of our schools and our economy is everyone’s business and responsibility. Schools are responsible for improvement if they are sufficiently funded and with support from both their school community and the larger community of the state of New Mexico. Positive economic development and great schools go hand in hand; and well funded schools can be one solution to Economic Growth.

Educational Leaders request a seat at the table to contribute their expertise and ideas to improve both our schools and New Mexico’s economy. Our leaders request they be part of the team to examine the points below and to work on a solutions-based plan to successfully prepare students and build a strong economy.

Our constitution requires that we provide a sufficient education for each child in New Mexico.

What is the true cost of this goal? What is meant by “sufficient”? Does it or should it mean…

A Certified/highly qualified teacher in every classroom?
A nurse in every school?
A counselor in every school?
A certified/highly qualified principal in every school
Maximum class sizes?
Minimum salary requirements?
Pre-K programs for all children?
Intervention programs?
Funding for timely instructional materials?

Until we know what is meant by “sufficient” we cannot know how to fund pre-K 12 education.

Currently, the state allocates funding for education based on a set unit value.

What is not widely known or understood is...

True per pupil allocation differs from district to district.
Fixed costs (insurance, utility costs, etc.) reduce the per pupil allocation
Lack of timeliness in providing reimbursements to districts means districts are not receiving all the money to which they are entitled; thus, state funds are used for federal programs, creating a cash flow problem.

The true per pupil allocation must be determined to assure that students are treated equitably.
We encourage the Legislature to consider the following requests for the immediate future and during the 2016 Legislative session:

Funding

New Mexico’s educational leaders request that of any new funding available for the 2016-17 school year, 50% be appropriated for K-12 public education.

Educational Leaders request that **All** new money allocated to public education be placed “above the line”.

Money placed below the line does not fund education for all children. Although funding is provided for some children, the effect further disequalizes the per pupil allocation in our schools.

Districts and school communities are held accountable for student performance, and districts should be trusted to make the best decisions for their students.

Place a moratorium on any new schools

Districts continue to see reductions based on the T & E factor

Should every child in New Mexico have access to technology in their school and classrooms? If so, what is the true cost of such a goal? Initiatives like the Education Superhighway will support this goal.

The Teacher and Leader Shortage is a Reality—we must work together to recruit and retain Highly Qualified Teachers and Leaders to provide an excellent education to every child in New Mexico.

How can this be accomplished? Quality requires sufficient funding!

Salary base for most teachers has been in place for ten + years; other than minimal increases for beginning teachers, salaries have remained stagnant for many years.

Salaries must be competitive with other professions. Entry level positions in other professions are more lucrative and are luring away many of our best and brightest candidates.

Salaries must be competitive with neighboring states; otherwise, our teachers will simply cross state lines to earn more money.

Novel strategies are necessary to recruit and retain the best people to become teachers and principals. Competitive salaries, quality mentor programs and appropriate classroom support and resources contribute to increased student achievement.

Effective mentoring programs. Fund effective mentoring programs and appropriate professional development programs to provide support while new teachers are learning and gaining confidence in their ability to provide effective instruction.
2016 Legislative Session Dates

January 19  Opening Day (noon)
February 3  Deadline for introduction of legislation
February 18  Session Ends (noon)
March 9  Legislation not acted upon by Governor is pocket vetoed
May 18  Effective date of legislation not a general appropriation bill or a bill carrying an emergency clause or other specified date

http://www.nmlegis.gov

Refer to the NMCEL website for Legislative Updates and Updates on Education Bills.
Applications for the annual NMCEL student scholarship are due in the NMCEL office via email no later than February 12, 2016. Two scholarships of $3,000 each will be awarded to two students who will graduate in May 2016 and enroll in a college or university in the Fall of 2016. Application forms have been sent to all high school counselors and are available on the NMCEL website.

Criteria:

1. Candidate must be a graduating senior from any public high school in the state of New Mexico.

2. Candidate must have a GPA of 3.0 or better for consideration.

3. Preference will be given to those entering the field of education (teacher, counselor, school business official, human resources, etc.).

Applicants must submit the following completed documents:

1. The Scholarship Application Form (signed by a high school official).

2. Two letters of recommendation from teachers and/or school administrators.

3. A written essay (at least 300 words) outlining reasons for entering the field of education.

Finalists must submit an Official High School Transcript prior to the interview process.

Email to: scholarship@nmcel.org (preferred method of submission)

or

Mail to: NMCEL

COE, MSC05 3040

1 UNM

Albuquerque, NM 87131

Phone: 505-277-6986

www.nmcel.org

Please encourage your students to submit an application before the February 12 deadline.
Dan Domenech  
Executive Director, AASA, The School Superintendents Association  
ESSA: That’s a Wrap, and We’re Five for Five

You have no doubt heard that Congress passed—and the President signed into law—the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It is the first iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to reach the President’s desk since December 2001.

ESSA represents a significant improvement over current law. The legislation takes the pendulum of federal overreach and control, and returns it back to state and local education agencies.

ESSA reauthorization was no small feat. The effort started (August 2007) shortly before I did at AASA (July 2008). It plodded along, like the Little Engine That Could, moving forward ever so slowly through Congress, and picked up with a particular vigor early this year. While the politics and momentum seemed against us, the effort persevered. And it is with a happy smile that I can write this post, and detail our advocacy efforts and victories.

As a small sampling of our advocacy effort, I want to highlight what we featured in the letter we sent to the conference committee as they worked to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate bills, and what the final ESSA included. You can read our priority position in the letter. I use the remainder of this article to detail the final verdict.

**Accountability:** Despite repeated efforts to create AYP 2.0, the final version of ESSA does NOT include 100 percent proficiency, adequate yearly progress or annual measurable objectives. We had compromised and accepted the mandatory identification of and intervention in low performing schools, but drew a line at mandatory intervention based on sub-group performance targets. Unlike NCLB where subgroup accountability triggered labels of ‘failing’ and triggered intervention, ESSA requires states to establish and report on—but not structure as a trigger—subgroup targets.

**Portability:** There are neither vouchers nor portability in ESSA. As we like to say at AASA, “Public dollars. Public schools. Hard stop.” And, “When the question is vouchers, the answer is no.”

**Expanded Data Collection:** The final Title I reporting includes a reasonable compromise between the House and Senate versions. We were able to push back on the expanded Title IX collection to the extent that NONE of it made it into the final ESSA.

**Title I Formula:** While the formula change we pushed through did not make it in the bill, we did get legislative language requiring Congress to evaluate the existing four Title I formulas, the role of number and percentage weighting, how those weights impact small/large/urban/rural schools, and how the current formulas address/exacerbate the inequitable allocation of dollars in a way that allows larger, less poor districts to receive more Title I money, per pupil, than smaller, poorer schools.

**Alternate Assessment:** ESSA includes a state-level participation cap (1 percent) with language to explicitly forbid the secretary or state to translate the state level cap into a local cap. IEP teams are free to determine alternate assessment as driven by IDEA, without fear of repercussion. Should a state breach its 1 percent cap, it can pursue a waiver.

As you can see, our advocacy efforts proved fruitful but our work, is far from over. We are now moving full steam ahead with efforts to support ESSA implementation. With expanded authority and flexibility comes increased responsibility. We look forward to supporting our state affiliates and members, and position them as the go-to leader.

Noelle Ellerson  
Associate Executive Director, AASA

Late last year, we featured a guest blog post on The Leading Edge titled Push for National Convention Would Put Constitution Up for Grabs and Lead to Major School Funding Cuts. We run that blog post again, here:

As state legislative sessions begin, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and related groups are ramping up a nationwide campaign to convene a constitutional convention that would propose amendments stripping the federal government of much of its power and leading to damaging funding cuts for the nation's schools and other priorities.
**Upcoming Events**

### NMCEL
- Executive Board Meetings:
  - February 4, 2016 (online)
  - April 14, 2016, CES
  - July 20, 2016, Embassy Suites
- Scholarship Application Deadline, February 12, 2016
- Board Retreat, June 6-7, 2016, Taos
- Summer Conference, July 20-22, 2016, Embassy Suites, Albuquerque

### NMAA
- Board of Directors Meeting, February 17, 2016
- Hall of Fame Banquet, March 10, 2016
- Commission Meeting, May 18, 2016
- Board of Directors Meeting, June 1, 2016

### NMASBO
- Winter Conference, February 10-12, 2016, Embassy Suites, Albuquerque
- Board Meeting, February 11, 2016, Embassy Suites, Albuquerque
- ASBO International Executive Leadership Forum, February 18-21, 2016, Las Vegas, NV
- Strategic Planning Meeting, March 4-5, 2016, Hotel Albuquerque
- Spring Budget Workshop, March 30-April 1, 2016, Hotel Albuquerque
- Board Meeting, March 31, 2016, Hotel Albuquerque
- Board Meeting, May 12, 2016, Web Conference Call
- Board Meeting, June 9, 2016, Web Conference Call

### NMSSA
- Meeting at Spring Budget Workshop, March 31, 2016, Hotel Albuquerque
- Meeting at NMSBA Law Conference, June 3, 2016, Tentative Date
- Meeting at NMCEL Conference, July 21, 2016, Embassy Suites

### AASA
- National Conference, February 11-13, 2016, Phoenix, AZ

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AASA, The School Superintendents Association cont’d.

Here’s the background. Under Article V of the Constitution, Congress must call a convention to propose constitutional amendments if two-thirds of the states formally request one. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many states passed resolutions calling for a convention to propose a federal balanced budget amendment. At one point, 32 states had passed resolutions along these lines, close to the 34 states required. But over the next 25 years, no more states passed resolutions and half of the states that had passed resolutions formally rescinded them, fearing that a convention would throw open the Constitution to harmful changes. The tide turned in 2010 as ALEC and its allies began pushing anew for state resolutions. Since then, 11 states have adopted new resolutions calling for a convention to propose a balanced budget amendment. Some proponents claim that 27 states have “live” applications, including those passed in the late ’70s and early ‘80s but never rescinded. They’ve targeted another 13 states for the coming year. If they succeed in seven of these states – a real possibility – they could claim to have met the 34-state threshold that forces Congress to call a convention.

A separate but similar effort to use Article V to call a constitutional convention also has gained momentum. Pushed by the Convention of States Project, its model resolution calls for a convention to propose amendments “that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government and limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress.” The movement has the vocal support of some well-known, hard-core conservatives. ALEC claims that legislative leaders in some 30 states are committed to the effort.

These unfolding events are highly alarming. The Constitution provides for no authority above that of a convention, so once a convention is called, it’s not clear that anyone could stop it from proposing any number of drastic changes to our system of government.

Constitutional experts have warned that a constitutional convention would place the nation in uncharted territory, putting the Constitution up for grabs. Delegates could even choose to alter the rules for ratifying amendments by calling, for example, ratification by national referendum rather than approval by three-fourths of the states.

Further, no rules have been established for conducting this sort of convention. How would delegates be selected? Would each state get the same number of delegates? How many votes would be needed to approve a proposed amendment? With so much at stake, these issues would likely be fought out in a highly

State Parks to Provide Every Fourth Grader with a Yearlong Pass to Explore New Mexico State Parks for Free

New Mexico State Parks will provide every fourth grader with a day pass, which will allow them to explore 11 New Mexico state parks for free. The partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers is part of the Every Kid in a Park program, which encourages kids and their families to explore the outdoors.

“New Mexico’s natural beauty is one of our greatest assets. It is important that we provide children and their families with every possible opportunity to explore the outdoors,” said NM State Parks Director Christy Tafoya. “Providing our kids with these passes gives them the opportunity to have meaningful hands-on learning experiences in the outdoors, which not only fosters respect for nature, but expands their dreams as they progress through school.”

The state parks participating in the program include: Navajo Lake, Sumner Lake, Elephant Butte Lake, Caballo Lake, Percha Cam, Leasburg Dam, Conchas Lake, Santa Rosa Lake, Heron Lake, El Vado and Brantley Lake State Parks.

In order to acquire the Every Kid in a Park pass, visit https://everykidinapark.gov/, answer some simple questions and redeem your pass at a federal facility in the state. Instructions and rules can also be found on this website. This pass is good for day use only.

The passes are good throughout the rest of the 2016 school year, and the department hopes to be able to continue this program in the following years. For more information, visit www.nmparks.com.
Your Continuous Improvement “Go To” Source

AdvancED is the largest community of education professionals in the world. Combining the knowledge and expertise of a research institute, the skills of a management consulting firm, and the passion of a grassroots movement for educational change, we serve as a trusted partner to 32,000 schools and school systems, engaging four million educators, serving 20 million students across the United States and 72 countries around the world. AdvancED was created through a 2006 merger of the PreK-12 divisions of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) – and expanded through the addition of the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) in 2011. We conduct rigorous, on-site external reviews of PreK-12 schools and school systems, assisting educational leaders to ensure that all learners realize their full potential. Our commitment is to help schools and school systems improve.

As of July 1, 2015, Dr. Susanna Murphy has been serving as the AdvancED New Mexico Director. Her 35 years of experience in both New Mexico’s K-12 and higher education sectors brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise for assisting school and school system leaders with improving organizational effectiveness and student learning. Our AdvancED New Mexico Council recently welcomed NMCEL’s Executive Director, Dr. Gloria Rendon, as a member of our Council, which consists of educational leaders from around the state committed to supporting schools and school districts in their quest for educational excellence.

Want to learn more about how AdvancED can assist you with your continuous improvement efforts? Contact Dr. Murphy at the AdvancED New Mexico Office, located at 1009 Bradbury SE, Albuquerque, NM on the UNM Science and Technology Park South Campus. You can reach her at 888-413-3669, ext. 5723 or email her smurphy@advanc-ed.org and look for highlighted information about our array of services in future NMCEL newsletters.

AASA, The School Superintendents Association cont’d.

partisan atmosphere heavily influenced by large political donors. And, with Congress and 31 state legislatures under full Republican control, the rules could be set in a way that helps ALEC and its allies advance radical changes they’d never get through under normal legislative procedures.

These changes likely would include a balanced budget amendment, which alone would be a disaster for the nation’s schools and the economy more broadly. During a major recession, this sort of amendment would likely lead to massive cuts in federal support for schools and other public services delivered at the state and local levels. Large cuts in federal spending, in turn, would worsen job losses during recessions, causing unnecessary pain for families across the country—pain that would add to stress and other difficulties for children in school.

ALEC and its allies are working hard to convince state lawmakers that a convention is safe and that states can easily control it. That’s simply not the case and a large number of groups are gearing up to educate state lawmakers about the dangerous realities of a constitutional convention.

With state legislatures in session over the next few months, now is a good time to connect with others concerned about these resolutions in your state. You can do so by contacting the group in your state belonging to the State Priorities Partnership (our network of state fiscal policy organizations) or the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. There’s a great deal at stake.