Overall: Mid-term elections mean all 435 members of the House were up for election, along with 335 seats in the Senate (33 seats up in normal order, two as special elections). Overall, the House switched from Republican to Democrat control, and Republicans maintain control of the Senate and expanded their majority. As of this writing, in the House Democrats have 226 seats compared to Republicans with 197 (10 races remain undeclared). In the Senate, Republicans have at least 51 seats, compared to 46 seats for Dems, with two races (FL and AZ) still being finalized.

The election results will alter Trump’s next two years in office and make a deeply divided nation even more difficult to govern as he seeks re-election in 2020. A Democratic House (the first since 2010) leaves the president without congressional support to move his agenda forward, which included another round of tax cuts, funding for the wall, attempts to undo the Affordable Care Act and more. Democrats have indicated a commitment to checking the president’s power and investigate his tax returns, Russian interference in the 2016 election and actions by his administration. The president will not be without power, though: He will continue to be able to reshape the federal court and cabinet departments, given a GOP Senate to do the confirming.

Leadership and Committee: As a result of the House changing leadership, there will be changes to chamber and committee leadership, including the House Education and the Workforce Committee. Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi is expected to resume her role as speaker of the House. In the House Education and the Workforce Committee, current Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-Va) is expected to step into the Chairman role in the new...
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**PARCC Linking Study - https://www.nwea.org/resources-parcc-linking-study/
Colleagues:
This November has seen the General Election finish and we want to welcome our new Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham as our newest partner in the new role she is entering. As we make this transition into the future, I am reminded that we are in one of the most critical times for public education in New Mexico. As the Governor-elect and her administration take over the leadership of the State PED it is incumbent that we map a course that will ensure that our students will be ready for their future and that we have a plan to ensure that the graduates from our public schools are well readied.

As a Coalition, with the insights of our Superintendents and others, we have launched “A Vision to Transform Education in New Mexico – 2019 Policy Recommendations for a Better Future” which we featured in our October Straight Talk. The finalized document is linked to our website — [2019 Policy Recommendations for a Better Future](#). This insightful work, completed by our New Mexico School Superintendents Association and endorsed by our NMCEL Board of Directors clearly defines, from a practitioner’s lens, the critical areas of focus and legislative action that must happen for us to meet our mission. It includes developing the **Profile of a New Mexico Graduate** which allows us to focus our mission with the end in mind. It places significance on the necessity that **stable and sufficient funding** be provided to assure that long-term, right-sized funding be calculated into the base. It reflects the significant crisis that we currently face to develop, recruit and retain human capital and sets targeted actions that will accomplish that end. It focuses on the **implementation of an equitable delivery system and progress monitoring** and compels the renewed effort to restructure our instructional delivery system to meet the requirements of the future. And, it importantly insists that the State’s educational statutes must include ongoing advice from educational practitioners by enacting an “Education Practitioner Advisory Council.”

With the 2019 Legislative Session imminent, now is the time for us to be active, clear and unified in our discussions with the new Governor’s Transition Team and our Legislators in urging them to implement the policy recommendations in this legislative cycle. With more than $1.5 billion in recurring and non-recurring funds, there is no more essential action that must be taken than to focus on our public education system and the sufficient funding necessary to serve ALL of our students. The pressure to do the right thing is even more pronounced as the **Yazzie/Martinez Lawsuit** imminently overlooks the actions of our Executive and Legislative leadership.

**The time to LEAD is NOW!!**

— Happy Thanksgiving, Stan
Retired or thinking about retiring? What is this New Mexico Association of Educational Retirees? NMAER was founded in 1942 as an inclusive, non-profit, voluntary, nonpartisan organization. Membership is open to all retired and/or actively employed educational staff members, including members of higher education, administrators, bus drivers, business offices, cafeteria workers, custodial, maintenance, educational assistants, secretarial staff and, of course, teachers. NMAER is dedicated to improving the quality of life for educational retirees by protecting their financial security, advocating for appropriate and meaningful education reforms, and supporting the current active educators in teaching our children.

This association fosters collaboration and encourages volunteer opportunities within each community. We believe, as we have all our lives, in promoting volunteerism as “it is more important to serve, not to be served.” As I’ve often stated, “Contrary to what others believe, we don’t retire and rest on our laurels – instead we become multi-directional.”

This organization works as a catalyst to educate and mobilize the membership around issues which affect retired educators and public education in New Mexico. Many times, an issue, if left unchecked, could adversely affect our retirees and education in our state.

One may ask, “What’s in it for me?” The NMAER has always guarded our retirement fund to ensure it will be there for us as well as future retirees. A critical issue we are currently facing is our Retiree Health Care. We were instrumental in passing amendment four to the New Mexico State Constitution which protects our pensions; however, there is no guarantee established to protect our health care. Our New Mexico Association works with a network of other retired educators (REAs and NRTAs) across the nation to protect and collaborate on issues affecting our well-being on a national scale (i.e. Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid). NMAER also has a strong partnership with NMAARP’s Educator Community.

As you know, we’re confronting a time of many changes — some good and some of which are not in our best interests. This is a time that we must bring inspired and concerned retirees and actively employed educators together to ensure that we are all well-informed and carry the same vision and goals. The focus of NMAER currently is on potential legislation to improve the solvency and sustainability of our pensions and health care funds. We are facing some serious and critical trials during the 2019 legislative session. We want to comprehend what is currently happening in our own state as well as the larger nation-wide changes and issues. We need to be prepared to meet any challenges on either front.

— Vicki Smith
President, NMAER
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SFO® Certifications

**Good News from NMASBO**

Several years ago, ASBO International introduced the SFO® (Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations) Certification program. To become an SFO®, the candidate must satisfy ASBO International's eligibility requirements and pass an exam to evidence their mastery of the competencies. The competencies, tested by the SFO® Exam, surpass the New Mexico requirements for the School Business Officer’s license as stated in state administrative code.

To be eligible, the candidate must have a: 1) Master’s Degree in a field related to school business and a minimum of two years of experience in the field of school business, 2) Bachelor’s Degree in a field related to school business and a minimum of three years of experience in the field of school business, or 3) seven years of experience as a school business official (approval is based upon the seasoned practitioner provision).

In September, NMASBO conducted a study group to help nine candidates prepare for the exam; they all passed. They are: Martin Romine, Zuni Public Schools; Teresa Casias, Wagon Mound Public Schools; Kimberly Stone, Capitan Municipal Schools; German Martinez, Grants-Cibola County Schools; Leslie Pearce, Tatum Municipal Schools; Vickie Garcia, Jemez Valley Public Schools; Brenda Gallegos, Pecos Independent Schools; Sarah Stubbs, Portales Municipal Schools; and Terry Dean, NMASBO.

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**AASA Election Analysis (cont. from p.1)**

Congress. Republicans on the committee could lose as many as seven of its current members. Two incumbents (Brat of VA and Lewis of MN) both lost their re-election bids, and a third (Handel of GA) trails her Democrat challenger. These three losses come after 4 GOP committee members did not seek re-election (Rokita and Messer of IN, Barletta of PA, and Garrett of VA). The GOP had 22 seats on the committee in the current Congress, a number that will fall when they become the minority, though the final number remains TBD. In the LHHS appropriations subcommittee, ranking member Rosa DeLauro (longtime strong supporter of public education and funding for public education) is expected to ascend to the Chairwoman spot. This becomes especially salient when we consider gridlock (either between the chambers or between Congress and the White House).

Congress has no absolute requirements to pass federal education policy reauthorization, but they do have an annual responsibility to adopt funding bills. To that end, it means that Ms. DeLauro could prove more impactful for education through her funding leadership than Mr. Scott may impact, should gridlock prevent policy bills from getting over the finish line. And at the full appropriations committee level, Nita Lowey is expected to be the first woman to lead the panel. She’s been ranking member since 2013. She is generally considered to be in the ideological center of the Democratic Party and has a strong relationship with Democratic caucus leaders including Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). She served on the Appropriations Committee with Pelosi, Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (MD) and Assistant Democratic Leader James Clyburn (SC) earlier in their careers. A former member of the LHHS Subcommittee, Lowey supports funding early childhood education, women’s health programs, community health centers and after-school activities. (H/T in part to Committee for Education Funding, Children’s Budget Caucus, Ed Week, Washington Post, Vox, Politico, and other listservs)

**Education Policy:** What to expect? A lot, though we have to remember to distinguish activity from productivity. That said, we have seen some of the strongest policy come from a split Congress and we remain optimistic. A Democratic House will step up oversight of the administration in general; specific to education, you can expect invitations for DeVos to account to the committee as well as increased ESSA implementation oversight. We could see a Democratic House come together with the Senate to move a permanent solution for DACA (which remains overwhelmingly bipartisan), though there are no guarantees the president would sign it.

School safety will remain a lightning rod, and you can expect the House committee to be especially loud if Sec DeVos includes information related to using federal dollars to arm school personnel in the Federal School Safety Commission report, expected in December. Potentially also tied into the report is the DeVos final decision/action on the school discipline guidance, which would again draw the ire of Democrats. The committee has indicated its strong interest in moving an infrastructure bill that includes education, an idea that gets bipartisan traction in the Senate and could receive the support of the president, who has long expressed interest in an infrastructure package (albeit it one without support for schools). We already know both the house and senate will re-up their efforts at legislation addressing/prohibiting seclusion and restraint in schools.

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**Affiliates Corner**

**THE ADVOCATE**

NMASBO.

Municipal Schools; Brenda Gallegos Garcia Tatum Municipal Schools; Cibola County Schools, Schools; Kimberly Stone Casias Romine they all passed. They are: tested a study group to help nine seasoned practitioner provision).

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AASA Election Analysis (cont. from p.6)

We already know both the house and senate will re-up their efforts at legislation addressing/prohibiting seclusion and restraint in schools. Over on the Senate side, while we don’t expect a shake up in the education committee membership, there is a different type of pressure: Current chairman Lamar Alexander enters his final term at the helm, due to term limits. This is his swan-song Congress, and there are a lot of eyes on whether or not he can work with Sen Murray on a Higher Education Act bill. They have a long, proven record of bipartisan work, but HEA has thus far proven elusive. (H/T in part to Committee for Education Funding, Children’s Budget Caucus, Ed Week, Washington Post, Vox, Politico, and other listservs)

State Governors and Legislatures Related graphics at the end, H/T Politico.

Governors: 36 governor seats were up for election in 2018. Democrats picked up at least 7 seats (up to 23), though Republicans still held more gubernatorial seats (26), even after losing ground. As of this writing, two governor races looked close to recount (Georgia and Florida). In terms of governors to watch for their education actions, EdWeek flagged five to follow: DeSantis (R-FL) for his expected efforts on choice, though we should note his race is likely headed back to recount; Tony Evers (D-WI) is a former education chief turned governor, who wants to increase education spending and look to water down the Milwaukee voucher program; Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM) moved from the House to the Senate, and campaigned on increasing K12 funding and teacher pay, universal pre-K, and limiting testing; Laura Kelly (D-KS) campaigned heavily on finding new money for public schools, including investments in early education, CTE and student mental health; and Jared Polis (D-CO), a former Representative, and big supporter of school-reform ideas including charters, Race to the Top, and more. Any of the success of these governors will be tied to their ability to work with the state legislature, which will be tied to whether or not the governor and legislature are of the same political party. Other governor races of interest to educators included Arizona, where incumbent Doug Ducey successfully defended his seat in a campaign where education funding was a hot issue; Kevin Stritt (R-OK) emerged victorious, campaigning against the tax hike the GOP-legislature passed to raise teacher pay;

Democrat J.B Pritzker defeated incumbent Bruce Rauner in Illinois in a campaign that centered on multiple issues related to school funding; and Minnesota, where Representative Tim Walz (Former teacher and Democrat) won the seat campaigning on reducing class size and indexing future education budgets.

Legislatures: Voters in 46 states cast ballot for more than 6,000 state legislative seats on election night. Democrats picked up 4 state legislatures. Only one state—Minnesota—has split chambers; all other bicameral states have single-party leadership. The state legislatures going to Democrats in 2018 include New Hampshire (Ds retook both chambers); Colorado (Senate flipped to D); Connecticut (Senate flipped to Ds); Minnesota (House flipped to Ds, splitting the legislature); and Maine (Senate flipped). State Policy: Over at Fordham Institute, they penned a good article detailing the meaning of the election on a handful of ballot initiatives and races that will impact education at the state level. They focus on three buckets: funding related items, policy questions, and governors.

Images: The following images were generated by Politico Pro Data Point, a service AASA advocacy subscribers to. They are available in PDF or PowerPoint; email if you would like them in either format.

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continued p. 9
AASA Election Analysis (cont. from p.8)

2018 Senate Election Results

Results as of 1:30 p.m., Nov 8

Democrats 46
Republicans 51

At least 3 seats lost
A net gain of at least two seats

Mississippi runoff
Ariz. and Fla. are too close to call
Current 115th Senate 47 (D), 51 (R), 2 (I)

Sources: The Associated Press

BY POLITICO PRO DATAPoint STAFF

2018 Governor Election Results

BY POLITICO PRO DATAPoint STAFF

Democrats gained seven governors, while Republicans lost six on net, with one race still too close to call in Georgia.

Overall, Democrats control 23 governorships while Republicans control 26.

States won, by party

Mississippi: There will be a runoff election to decide the final winner between Cindy Hyde-Smith (R) and Mike Espy (D) to select the state’s second senator.

Nov, 7 2018

— continued p. 11
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2018 Elections
Changes in State Education Leadership

Governors
36 States plus D.C. held governors races.

Resulting in
11 New
5 Incumbent
* Plus D.C. Mayor.
19 New
11 Incumbent

50 State Governors*
23 Democratic Governors
* Plus D.C. Mayor.
26 Republican Governors
* GA undecided as of 11/08

Legislative Chambers
87 of the 99 chambers held elections.

Democrats gained
CO CT ME MN NH NH
SENATE SENATE HOUSE SENATE HOUSE
No gains for Republicans

Democrats control
37
NE is unicameral

Republicans control
61

Chief State School Officers
7 states held elections.

Resulting in
ID OK SC WY
Incumbent Incumbent Incumbent Incumbent
*AZ undecided as of 11/08

State Boards of Education
40 seats were up for election.

Resulting in
21 New
19 Incumbent

8 states plus D.C. held elections

Thanks to NGA, NCSEL, CCSSO and NASBE for their collaboration.
LESC Focuses on School Absenteeism

In preparation for the 2019 legislative session, lawmakers had a robust discussion on student attendance and chronic absenteeism. On Nov. 14 the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard from Rep. Patricio Ruiloba (Bernalillo) and Dr. Angelo Gonzales, Chief Strategy Officer for the United Way of Central NM, who provided lawmakers an overview of legislation that was left on the table last year but has since been modified and will be reintroduced as “Attendance for Success Act” in the upcoming session.

The LESC holds meetings throughout the year at the Roundhouse and in communities throughout the state.

The bill maintains a holistic approach to support schools, students and their families who all share the responsibility with attendance. Rep. Ruiloba said the bill mirrors what schools must already do through implementation of their 90-day plans and ESSA in approaching issues with teams of stakeholders. Dr. Gonzales said improving attendance starts with engaged families and it’s incumbent on everyone to surround kids with support, as attendance is a key predictor of whether a student will graduate.

Prevention-based strategies are needed to address poor attendance. Reasons for students who miss school include low academic performance, low aspirations, not engaged, drugs or health problems, bullying, weak school policies, class and school size, transportation and family economics, among other reasons. These are the same reasons for students’ poor academic outcomes. Dr. Gonzales said among the recommendations to tackle this statewide issue is to improve data collection which helps inform what interventions should be taken by school, home and outside agencies.

A focus on good attendance must begin early. He said the myth that it’s okay to miss school when in preschool or kindergarten must be debunked. LESC chairwoman Sen. Mimi Stewart (Bernalillo) agreed saying “you have to get students to say ‘I’m going to school today.’”

\[ \text{AASA Advocacy Update} \]

**IRS and Tax Loophole Regulations:** Last week the IRS heard arguments from school superintendents and voucher proponents about the possibility of the IRS closing down a tax shelter in 12 states that allows voucher supporters to profit from their donations to voucher tax credit programs. Superintendents from across the country submitted comments to the IRS in October urging them to not carve-out voucher programs from this larger tax regulation impacting state tax credits. While we were outnumbered at the IRS hearing we had the stronger tax arguments. The IRS ruling is expected in January or February.

**Public Charge:** AASA is encouraging all school leaders to weigh in ASAP on a proposed immigration regulation that could jeopardize the ability of your immigrant students to access to healthcare, food and housing. Specifically, the public charge regulation would amend a policy that has been on the books for decades and is intended to ensure that immigrants who have entered the U.S. legally are not granted green cards or lawful permanent resident cards if they are “likely to become primarily dependent on the government for subsistence.”

The Trump Administration is changing the definition of a “public charge” to anyone who receives any assistance with health care, nutrition or housing. Because of the complexity of the new regulation, it is predicted that families (not just a family member who would be considered a public charge) will refuse to participate in Medicaid/CHIP, SNAP (food stamps) and public housing programs like Section 8. Specifically, this means that families with children who qualify for healthcare, nutrition and housing benefits will forego accessing these benefits for fear it could jeopardize a family member’s ability to stay in the U.S. Read more about how this could impact district finances and take action using the AASA template here.

**Farm Bill:** Democratic control of the House is likely to be a kick in the pants to get the Farm Bill finalized before January. If the House Republicans want to get some of their elements in, they will likely need to compromise with the Senate on key provisions, including the work requirements from SNAP. If a reauthorization is not passed before January, the House will start over with a democrat-friendly option. The wild card, however, is President Trump’s threat to veto any bill that does not include the SNAP work requirements.

--- ***continued p. 14***
AASA Advocacy Update (cont).

- **Higher Education Act**: Once Representative Scott regains reigns of the House education committee, the Republican-led PROSPER Act will be officially dead. House Democrats have introduced the Aim Higher Act, which would expand the loan assistance programs used by teachers that were eliminated under PROSPER. The Senate may consider writing a full reauthorization bill of their own, which would be a compromise between Aim Higher and PROSPER.

- **Superintendent Salary**: If you have already completed the 2018 Superintendent Salary Survey, thank you! If you have not, please consider taking the time to do so – a high response rate improves our analysis and the ensuing report. The survey is still live and available here: [https://survey.k12insight.com/r/4FS8p6](https://survey.k12insight.com/r/4FS8p6)

- **ADEA**: In the first Supreme Court decision of the season, the Court decided unanimously (8-0) on a case that could impact the smallest of school districts. In *Mount Lemmon Fire District v. Guido* the justices determined that the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) must apply to all public employers, regardless of size. It was previously held that only employers with over 20 employees could be held to the ADEA. What is the ADEA and how does it impact school personnel? The ADEA holds that employers cannot discriminate based on age. Normally, it is used to discourage using old age as a reason for firing or not hiring an employee. How does this impact school districts? Since 1974, most districts have been covered by ADEA without much impact. Superintendents of districts with fewer than 20 employees – be cognizant now that you do not explicitly use age as a reason to fire or not hire an individual. Superintendents with 20 or more employees – this is not a change, but still be cognizant that you do not explicitly use age as a reason to fire or not hire an individual. Education Week posted an overview of the issue [here](https://www.edweek.org/).

- **Appropriations**: It is not new news, but it is highly atypical: Congress completed its funding work for the Labor Health Human Services Education & Other (LHHS) slice of the federal funding pie ahead of schedule. LHHS is the appropriations bill that funds USED and provides the bulk of federal education dollars to K12 schools. Federal fiscal year 2019 (FY19) started October 1. In recent years—spanning more than a decade—Congress has failed to complete its funding work on time and has needed to implement a continuing resolution (CR) for parts or all of the budget to avoid a federal shutdown. LHHS was always one of the funding pieces left to the end, often used to absorb cuts to pay for increases elsewhere. Different political pressures aligned for 2019 (which will be in schools for the 19-20 school year) and resulted in LHHS being funded on time. Full details are [on the blog](https://www.edweek.org/), but here’s a quick rundown:
  - Overall allocation to USED is $71.5 billion, an increase of $581 million. The final bill rejects the proposal to consolidate USED with the Department of Labor, as well as the Trump/DeVos privatization agenda. The bill does NOT include language to prohibit the use of federal education dollars to arm school personnel.
  - Programs receiving an increase: Title I ($100 m); Title IVA ($70 m); IDEA Part B ($100 m); 21st Century ($10 m); Charter School grants ($40 m); Perkins Career Tech ($70 m); Impact Aid ($32 m);
  - Programs that are level funded: Title II A; Title III;
  - [Full chart](https://www.edweek.org/) courtesy of Committee for Education Funding

*The information provided this month by AASA was aggregated across multiple resources. Information was also gathered from Education Week, the Washington Post, Politico, Vox, Education Commission on the States, and Bloomberg, as well as coalitions and listserves to which AASA either belongs to or subscribes to, including the Committee for Education Funding and Children’s Budget Coalition. Thank you Sasha, Leslie and Noelle Ellerson Ng, Assoc. Executive Director, Policy & Advocacy for AASA, and Dr. Lillian Torrez, President, NM School Superintendent’s Association.*
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- Labor Management Relations
- Legal Updates
- HR 101: Learning the Basics
- Employee Health and Wellness

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NMAER Awards 2018 Scholarships

In 2015, the New Mexico Association of Educational Retirees established a scholarship program for current educational employees working toward a Bachelor’s Degree and/or a Master’s or Doctorate Degree. In 2018, 55 educators from throughout the state applied for the NMAER Scholarship program. In August, we were pleased to announce three recipients for the $1,000 Scholarships. They are:

**SHEILA KRUIS**
Sheila has been a licensed teacher since 1992. She has taught in the Pueblo of Zuni and in several elementary schools in Gallup. Most of her experiences have been in Early Childhood Education. Currently, she is in her sixth year of teaching Pre-School at Indian Hills Elementary, which is a magnet school for all the deaf and hard of hearing children in the Gallup McKinley County School District. Over the last few years, she has been learning the American Sign Language so that she can help her students and is working on a Master’s in the Deaf Education Graduate Program at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Her goal is to work in a school with deaf and hard of hearing students. She and her husband share the duty of raising their children one year at a time; while one works, the other one stays home to raise the children. What is especially noteworthy is that Sheila and her husband have taken into their home over 100 foster children during this time.

**ANGELA PENA**
Angela was raised in a small rural community in northern New Mexico where “higher education opportunities were scarce and graduation rates were low.” She stated that she has “overcome” the odds and has been pursuing a higher education for the past six years. Currently, she is employed at Eldorado High School in Albuquerque and is working on a Master’s Degree in Special Education with a concentration in Intellectual Disability and Severe Disabilities. In the spring of 2016, she graduated from the Central New Mexico Community College with an Associate Degree in Teacher Education, in Special Education. In the spring of 2018, she received her Bachelor’s Degree from the University of New Mexico. Her short-term goal is to obtain her Master’s Degree and work within the Albuquerque Public Schools District. Her long-term goal is to return to northern New Mexico where she can give back to her local community.

**JENNIFER REYES-ISLAVA**
Jennifer is in her fourth year as a first-grade teacher at Desert Hills Elementary in Las Cruces. She is also in her fourth semester as a part-time graduate student working toward a Master’s Degree in Curriculum and Instruction at New Mexico State University. Her goal is to become a Reading Specialist. “As a fourth year, first-grade teacher, my first couple of years, I struggled teaching young readers, foremost the students that were struggling to read. Having little to almost no skills of how to teach my young readers how to read was a skill that I lacked,” she said. “My goal is to become a Reading Specialist so as to share with other staff and create effective reading strategies.” Jennifer is a young mom with a two-year old and is expecting her second child. She is primarily the only parent at home as her husband works the majority of time out of town.

Congratulations Sheila, Angela and Jennifer!

— H. Russell Goff, Executive Director, NMAER

News from the NMPED

**Record Number of Grads Earn Bilingual Seal**

New Mexico’s Education Secretary Christopher Ruszkowski announced that a total of 1,327 students have earned the Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy on their state Diploma of Excellence since the seal was first implemented in 2015. This includes 676 in 2018, the largest group ever. Students earned the seal for demonstrating proficiency in Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese, Keres, Navajo, Tewa, Tiwa and Zuni. New Mexico was the fifth state in the country to adopt a state bilingual seal; the graduating class of 2016 was the first class eligible to earn the seal. Students can achieve the Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy on their Diploma of Excellence and a notice of the seal on their official high-school transcript via one of the four pathways: Tribal Certification; Units of Credit and Assessment; Units of Credit and Alternative Process Portfolio; or Assessment and Alternative Process Portfolio. There are 20 school districts and five charter schools currently offering the Seal.
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.
Jo Lynn Gallegos
Business Manager
President, NMSSPA
NMCEL

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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
LornaVDyer@aol.com
505-820-1778
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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**
  **LAWS & GUIDANCE – US DEPT OF ED.**
  There are times when you need a quick review of an educational law. Use this website from the US Department of Education. It gives guidance for issues such as FERPA (which has a link for parents), IDEA, Higher Education Opportunity Act and ESSA (which also includes an information page).

- **FEATURED VIDEOS**
  **Featured Video**
  This video, which has six parts, will not only make you laugh, but can serve as an ice-breaker or kick-off for staff/principals meetings throughout the year. The animated messages focus on leadership and collaboration. It could also jump-start a discussion on the power of teamwork.

- **GOOD BOOKS**
  **“WHATEVER IT TAKES”**
  REBECCA & RICHARD DUFOUR, ROBERT EAKER, AND GAYLE KARHANEK
  As the subtitle indicates, this book examines “how professional learning communities respond when kids don’t learn.” There are real-life examples of new teacher and administrator interventions and how schools faced barriers to learning and how they overcame them.

New Mexico School Personnel Assoc. Conference Set
Get registered and secure your room for the first annual NMSPA Conference scheduled for Feb. 5-6, 2019 in Albuquerque at the Embassy Suites Hotel. This conference will satisfy many of your personnel needs including legal updates, licensure information, interviewing techniques and other training. Get more information on registration and costs online at: www.nmschoolpersonnel.org/2019-conference. Room rates go up after Jan. 20, 2019. See the flyer about the conference on page 16.

Upcoming Events

**NMCEL**
Dec. 13: Executive Board Mtg., 10 a.m., NMAA Conference Rm. A

**NMAA**
Dec. 6: NMAA Board of Directors Meeting

**NMASBO**

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

**NMSSA**
Dec. 6: Executive Council Dinner, 6-8 p.m.
Dec. 7: Meeting in conjunction with NMSBA, 2-5 p.m., Embassy Suites

Nov. 22: Thanksgiving
Dec: National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month
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Learn more about Science Techbook for NGSS and our professional learning resources at:

DiscoveryEducation.com/NGSS

For More Information, Contact:
Mary Anne Guy, Educational Partnerships
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Defining the Least Restrictive Environment

School district officials continue to learn how best to meet the needs of children with disabilities and how to follow numerous guidelines and directives put forth by the US Department of Education and the courts. Defining and implementing a “least restrictive environment (LRE)” is discussed in this article from Kappan, the professional journal for educators. Read this article authored by Julie Underwood.

Zuni Schools (cont. from p.1)

making its way back into recognition. Other school districts have asked the “who, what, where, when, and why” to how they (other tribes) can replicate our program for them.

In addition, ZPSD is also very proud of our revitalized full-size greenhouse. ZPSD restored an old and rundown greenhouse into a modern, fully functioning, and producing place that is just starting to help move the district to producing its own organic vegetables for all its school sites. This greenhouse is not only producing food for our students, but it is part of the project-based initiative at the elementary, mid school, and at the Twin Buttes Cyber Academy. Eventually, this will also be a part of the high school.

Speaking of the high school (which led to a district-wide school policy change), ZPSD changed it attendance policy. We limited the total number of days absent per semester to eight, regardless of excused or unexcused. We found that the number of students in class, and the number of tardies have dropped by almost two-thirds! We also found that students’ GPAs have gone up because of the obvious reason — they are coming to school more.

Lastly, ZPSD has implemented this year student-led conferences district-wide (Pre-K through 12). Our district needed better support from our parents, so we required all parents to attend student-led conferences twice a year. Yes, both staff and administrators were skeptical about parents attending. However, the parents stepped up and at all four school sites; the attendance for the first-ever student-led conferences was over 97%. Yes, that number is correct!

All of these initiatives are a part of a district effort to improve our school grades. This district has historically had low performance on state mandated tests and we needed to do something different. Although we have a lot more initiatives going on in the district, we feel that these initiatives have started to move the needle in the right direction. Please don’t hesitate to contact us about what we are doing in Zuni because these are outside the box ideas that we would love to share with all.

— Daniel P. Benavidez, Superintendent
Zuni Public School District
daniel.benavidez@zpsd.org
(505) 782-5511

NMASBO (cont. from p.6)

Martin Romine gave kudos to the group study saying “everyone is ready, willing, and able to share their knowledge and experience to help us all succeed. If you are thinking about sitting for the exam, or even if you are not, make it a goal. Write it down, plan for it, and schedule it. You may not want to take it this year but don’t put it off too long. The satisfaction of receiving that certificate stating that you truly do know what you are doing is incomparable.”

NMASBO will present the individuals with framed certificates (courtesy of Horace Mann) at the upcoming Winter Conference, February 13-15 in Albuquerque.

NMASBO will be conducting another study group at the 2019 Fall Conference in Las Cruces on September 18-20. And, NMASBO offers a reimbursement program for the successful completion of the exam. Come join the fun and don’t miss out on this opportunity.

— Terry Dean, NMASBO Executive Director

Defining the Least Restrictive Environment

School district officials continue to learn how best to meet the needs of children with disabilities and how to follow numerous guidelines and directives put forth by the US Department of Education and the courts. Defining and implementing a “least restrictive environment (LRE)” is discussed in this article from Kappan, the professional journal for educators. Read this article authored by Julie Underwood.
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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.