

New Mexico School for the Arts
Head of School Report: May 2021
Report by Eric Crites

NMSA provides access to a rigorous mastery arts and academic high school education for youth with passion and aptitude in the arts, leading to post-secondary learning, careers in the arts, and lives that contribute to society.

Kudos

- A big thank you to Gayle McGuiness for nine years of dedicated work in support of the mission of NMSA.
- A big thank you to Laurel Coffey-Bodine for coordinating our Celebration of Learning on May 14. Students spent the day engaged in sharing of projects, performances, and presentations from their arts and academic studies. It was a festive, engaging, and joyful day to connect after a year of being distanced. <https://sites.google.com/nmschoolforthearts.org/celebrationoflearning/home?authuser=0>. Thank you also to Acacia McCombs and the many teachers and staff members who helped make the day happen!
- A big thank you to Bernadette Peña for leading Student Council in hosting two successful and important NMSA community events: Pentarts and Promovie.
- A big thank you to our Parent Association, which has fit a year's worth of celebratory support into April and May. They've provided lunch, flowers, decorations, etc. for school reentry, Educator Appreciation Week, Prom, and the Celebration of Learning.
- Congrats to Artemisio Romero y Carver (VA/12), who was recognized by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools as one of their "[30 under 30 Changemakers](#)".
- Congrats to Oz Leshem (CWL/10) who has been selected to be the Santa Fe Youth Poet Laureate for 2021.
- Congrats to our three recipients of the Davis New Mexico Scholarship, which covers the full cost of attendance at a partner college: vocalist Elsa Sanchez-Tolentino (Lawrence University); theatre artist Lucy Shattuck (University of Denver); and visual artist Veronica Silva (University of Denver).
- Karina Hean, visual arts department chair, was recognized by Public Charter Schools of New Mexico during their educator appreciation week Facebook feature.

School Re-Entry Update

- 222 students (80%) of students are attending school on campus.
- Our seniors, with lots of support from Chelamia Quintana and the student support team, are all on track to graduate.
- We have not had any COVID-positive cases reported among our students and staff since reentry on April 5; we remain prepared to follow NMPED guidelines in the event that there is a COVID-positive case.
- NM Department of Health is providing a vaccine clinic at NMSA on Thursday, May 20. It is open to the public, and the Pfizer vaccine will be provided to those 12+.
- The Senior Recognition Assembly was held with seniors in person.

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- Graduation will be held with capacity restrictions at the Santa Fe Convention Center at 12:00 p.m., Friday, May 28. Bill Beacham will represent the Governing Council and Carl Thoma will represent the Board of Trustees.

Legislative/PED/PEC

- Charter Schools Division conducted an abbreviated virtual site visit on May 5. Thank you to Michael Kaplan for representing the Governing Council.
- NMSA notified PED that the school will not be participating in the ELTP (extended school year) program. The impacts on learning of the COVID year will be addressed through acceleration during our regular school calendar and school day, which already exceeds statutory minimums by 161 hours.
- Title I and Title II applications have been submitted to PED. Title IV and IDEA-B applications will be submitted by their respective deadlines.

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction

- The Western Educational Equity Assistance Center provided its first training to our Equity Leadership Team in May.
- Chelamia Quintana is leading a project to use our SEL grant through PED to support training in restorative justice practices.

Safety

- Since April 5, we have conducted two fire drills, an evacuation drill, and a shelter-in-place (including active shooter threat) drill.

Staffing

- We are currently hiring for math, science, and social studies/language arts in order to fill positions being vacated by departing faculty and to address the growth in enrollment for 2021-2022.

Facilities

- The retractable glass walls have been installed in the cafeteria and paseo--they provide a magical connection between indoors and outdoors.