

New Mexico School for the Arts  
Head of School Report: November 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

- Congratulations to Elvis Marin, who has been offered the Davis NM Scholarship. Elvis's top choice is to attend Lawrence University, where he plans to continue his study of flute.
- Upcoming: The Music Department will host their Winter Concert in the courtyard on December 1 at 3:30 p.m. The Creative Writing & Literature Department will host their Winter Literary Gala at Collected Works Bookstore on December 8, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

#### School Re-Entry Update

- We have had five positive COVID cases among students since the beginning of the school year.
- PED has now offered a "Test to Stay" option for close contacts.
- 98% of staff and 70% of students are fully vaccinated.
- FEMA provided a Moderna booster shot clinic for our staff. We will soon offer a Pfizer shot clinic for ages 5-11 (and anyone else interested).
- On-site COVID testing will begin December 2, thanks to Brandy Avila and Cecile Hemez. We will provide voluntary surveillance testing and can also provide on-demand testing/
- Impacts of the stresses related to the ongoing pandemic are significant and ongoing.

#### Legislative/PED/PEC

- We expect our graduation rate calculation for the 2021 4-year cohort to be 97%. The entire NMSA faculty and staff get credit for this incredible outcome; it is important to recognize Chelamia Quintana and the Student Support Team for their critical contributions to our students' daily success, including graduation outcomes.

#### Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction

- PED has agreed to bring Dr. Hollie's Culturally & Linguistically Responsive training to NMSA on January 19-20.
- During our November inservice, Dr. Danielle Sullivan presented on Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and its relationship to CLR.
- We had a staff training with the Mountain Center on Allyship in Action and Ungendering Language. The Mountain Center will provide this training to students through their arts departments.

#### Staffing Updates

- Joey Chavez: The incomparable Joey Chavez is retiring after this week. Joey is a beloved member of our NMSA community, which he helped found and shape

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(as theatre chair, theatre teacher, dean of students, director of the arts, and many more hats!); he has positively impacted thousands of young peoples' lives in his three-decade career as a theatre educator; and he is a New Mexico treasure.

Joey will continue to be connected to the NMSA community and we congratulate him on his retirement.

- Charles Gamble: Theatre teacher Charles Gamble will be going on a loing-planned sabbatical after this week in order to spend the rest of this school year developing his professional practice as an actor and theatre artist. Charles is one of NMSA's founding teachers and recently guided the 9th and 10th graders through the incredible Cinematic Mime process, one of the many gifts Charles has brought to our theatre program. We wish him well during this sabbatical! New theatre teacher Laurel Minter will be stepping into Charles' teaching role following Thanksgiving break.
- James Reich: Creative Writing & Literature Chair James Reich has resigned and will be leaving NMSA after the semester ends in December. We are grateful to James for his work in developing our newest department and wish him the best in his next steps. Starting in January and for the remainder of the school year, Creative Writing & Literature teachers Laurel Coffey-Bodine and Diego Gomez will take on the roles of acting co-coordinators of the department, working closely with Denise Hinson (who developed and launched the department) in an oversight role.
- Mvhayv Talon Claybrook: Visual Arts teacher Mvhayv has resigned and will be leaving NMSA after the semester ends in December. We are grateful for Mvhayv's caring work inspiring our young visual artists!