

New Mexico School for the Arts
Head of School Report: October 2022
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

- Congrats to the Visual Arts Department on their All for One exhibition (artist Zach Concha with his subject, theatre student Merrick Kohn).



- Addie Oracion (11/Music) and Narai Armour (11/Music), with Ms. Kountoupes, performed at the Governor's Mansion.



- The Jazz Band, with Mr. Rangel and Ms. Cruz, traveled to perform in Artesia for outreach and to visit Carsbad Caverns National Park.



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- The ArtsReach Team (Sativa Cruz, Fred Graham, Shayla Patton) organized two days of visits from 7th- and 8th-graders from El Camino Real. A follow-up note from El Camino Real art teacher Carol Schrader is attached below.

School Year Update

- While our students are much further along in the process of recovering from the experience of being isolated during the first year of COVID, we are still seeing elevated levels of stress and the need for mental health support.
- We have more clubs than ever before. We have more students taking honors courses than ever before. Students want to be engaged!
- While our overall COVID infection incidences have been low, last week we had an uptick in student and staff infections.
- We have a COVID bivalent booster clinic scheduled for October 28, 11-3. 40 people received flu shots on campus last week.

PED/PEC/CSD

- We received the PSCOC lease assistance award letter in the amount of \$252,020. This exceeded the budgeted amount by \$16,487, which will require a revision to the Third Amendment to the Lease.
- The final reports from the Charter Schools Division FY22 site visits have not yet been released. Once they are, there will be a discussion item on the Governing Council agenda to review the report.
- PED notified the school that we have been selected to participate in this year's spring NAEP field test for 12th-graders.

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction/Equity

- Academic faculty are meeting biweekly in their PLC's to engage in professional development and planning on three equity-focused topics: Standards-Based Grading; Project-Based Learning; and Equity (including completing the Representation review of the curriculum).
- The Multicultural and Leadership Club planned and hosted an interactive assembly and celebration to recognize and honor Hispanic Heritage Month.
- Using the Outdoor Equity Grant she secured, Ms. Cruz led a student mural project in association with Determined Art Movement and artist Autumn Dawn Gomez in late September.

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- Student Council elections were completed. Ms. Vigil will work with students to identify non-voting student representation for the Governing Council
- NMSA will be participating in the coaching pathway for culturally & linguistically responsive instruction professional development through Dr. Hollie's organization.
- Ms. Aldana submitted an application for a grant for Restorative Justice training for six staff members through a program of NMPED. Unfortunately, NMSA's application was not selected. We will apply again in the future.
- Ms. Vigil and Mr. Crites attended the Sin Fronteras training on Family Partnership Circles.
- Ms. Welch is our new Equity Council Lead and is re-establishing the council with new membership reflective of our student demographic.

Safety

- On October 14, NMSA had a shelter in place due to an unauthorized person entering the building. The individual did not interact with or harm anyone, and SFPD swept the building to make sure there were no other unauthorized persons in the building. The Safety Committee reviewed the incident and is adding a door duty position in the mornings when the front door is unlocked for entry. We are continuing to try to establish a stronger partnership with SFPD to ensure quick notification of emergency situations and quick response when we call 911. With our location downtown and with crime rates and distress in the community up, we are seeing more of these types of incidents this school year. With the dorm opening on campus next year, we will continue to need to review plans for security staffing.
- We are adding additional cameras to areas currently short on camera coverage.

Staffing

- We are currently interviewing for: Gifted Coordinator and two Instructional Assistant Positions.
- Fernando Ramos-Cintron has started his work with our students as Dance Department Co-Chair.

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- From Ms Hean: VA New Media Instructor, Treston Chee, will work with students in VA through the end of this semester (Dec 16). Chee has been offered numerous opportunities to work on incredible videography projects that focus on the intersection of wilderness, conservation, the environment, and regional indigenous communities. Chee will be very missed and shared his news with students on T Oct 18th. We are so grateful for the last year of incredibly compassionate mentorship and instruction Chee has offered our students and are excited that he is finding professional opportunities in his field. We will be posting this position soon and invite all to share the job posting.
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Email to Fred Graham from El Camino Real art teacher Carol Schrader:

Hello NMSA folks, thank you so much for the incredible experience you gave our students last week. We were amazed at the reception and opportunities you offered to our students, and we let them know how special they were to be receiving this opportunity. I know it was transformative for them in many different ways. Some students will definitely apply to NMSA, and this experience helped them decide and prepare. Others have never thought about what they want their high school experience to be, so this opened their eyes to the opportunities available. And for others, the chance to see live performance was unusual and appreciated. Students really loved the Sevillana dance, and one student told me the theater performance was the funniest thing she had ever seen! And of course it was great to see our students from El Camino that are now your students.

Thank you again for this great partnership, and for making our students feel so welcomed.

I appreciate all that you do to make NMSA a flagship school for NM.

Carol