

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

- Sarita Gonzalez, with the support of Liza Stewart and Diego Gomez, hosted NMSA's inaugural Poetry Slam as part of her senior project. This was the fulfillment of a four-year dream for Sarita! The winner was Sofia Salazar.



- A big thank you to Marie Tapia for her amazing leadership in transitioning our kitchen from a contract to an in-house program.
- Thank you to Colleen Gavin, Peggy Favour, Erik Mease, Kihei Meyer, Paula Tackett, and Cindy Montoya for all they did to get the dorm design project successfully through the city review process.
- Congrats to Dr. Weldon Beauchamp on securing an \$8,000 hydroponics grant.

School Year Update

- Collaboration Day occurred on Friday, November 18. Led by seniors Lila Quezada and Zoe McDonald, students organized a day of activities so that all students and staff could experience a taste of all arts departments in one day.
- The CDC COVID Community Level for Santa Fe County has been LOW for several weeks. Our COVID case counts have not spiked in recent weeks. We are seeing high levels of respiratory illness in students and staff who are NOT testing positive for COVID (flu, RSV, colds).
- Our in-house lunch and dorm meal program launches the first week of January. We have hired Angela Ortiz, who ran the program at NMSA for Kids Kitchen, as our kitchen program manager. We have also reassigned Olivia Miramontes, from our facilities team, to work as the assistant cook in the kitchen for about three hours per day. We do not expect any significant change in the experience our students and staff will have with their meals during this change.

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PED/PEC/CSD

- 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.
- Notification was submitted to the Public Education Commission of the addition of Doddie Espinosa de Ortega to the Governing Council
- Eric Crites, Trina Raper, and Chelamia Quintana attended the Public Charter Schools of New Mexico annual conference.

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction/Equity

- The Equity Council will be reconstituted for 2023 starting in January with the the Equity Council Lead, Shell Welch. Ms. Welch will be focused on seating members of the NMSA and New Mexico community who very accurately reflect the four student categories identified in the Yazzie-Martinez suit: Native American students; English learners; students with disabilities; and economically disadvantaged students.

Staffing

- We have hired Angela Ortiz as the Lunch Program Manager; Alison Morgan as Instructional Assistant; and Eden Radfarr as Digital Media Instructor
- Dr. Sarah Holmes has decided to leave her position as Social Studies Teacher at the end of the first semester. We wish her the best in her next steps.
- We are currently interviewing for: Gifted Coordinator; Instructional Assistant; and Social Studies Teacher.