

New Mexico School for the Arts
Head of School Report: February 2023
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

- Noel McCoy (11/Vocal) performed the National Anthem at the Roundhouse Rotunda for American Indian Day at the Legislature 2023. Link to video: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/18HL6f2fy60A8Bq9Zy1DtuAxfmfaUwkTyb/view?usp=sharing>



School Year Update

- The CDC COVID Community Level for Santa Fe County has remained LOW. Our COVID case counts have not spiked in recent months. We are seeing high levels of respiratory illness in students and staff who are not testing positive for COVID (flu, RSV, colds).
- Core values update: Faculty are working on implementing the most recent iteration of core values that were shared with the Governing Council.
- The English Department is piloting a standards-based grading approach for Quarter 3.
- ArtSpring is March 16 and 17. About $\frac{1}{3}$ of students are participating in the show. This year, students will miss less classtime than ever before during ArtSpring week thanks to having the show in March and careful rehearsal planning by our wonderful ArtSpring team.

PED/PEC/CSD

- The draft final report from the Charter Schools Division FY22 site visit was received February 10. Our overall rating was listed as Meets Standard (the only overall ratings are Meets Standard or Does Not Meet Standard). We reviewed the data for accuracy and provided corrections to Charter Schools Division

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ahead of the February 24 deadline. Final reports will be on the PEC agenda in March. We anticipate having the final report on the Governing Council agenda for review during the March meeting.

- The Charter Schools Division's annual monitoring site visit is scheduled for April 26, 2023.
- Eric Crites and Michael Kaplan attended the Charter Schools Division's first Charter Renewal training. Applications are anticipated to be due October 2. We will begin securing family and staff Petitions of Support signatures immediately.
- A parent of a current NMSA student and an NMSA graduate testified about their concerns regarding La Tierra Montessori at the PEC's December meeting. The parent mentioned NMSA because two of his student's have attended our school after their time at La Tierra Montessori, and because his younger child is in the process of applying to NMSA. The way the testimony was worded may have created confusion that his concerns were regarding NMSA, even though the concerns were regarding La Tierra Montessori. Eric has received documentation from the parent to clarify this and will be submitting it to the Charter Schools Division and PEC.
- NMSA's Facilities Master Plan expires in summer 2023; we will be working on an updated FMP for submission.

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction/Equity

- Equity Council Lead, Shell Welch, has completed the process of re-establishing the membership of the NMSA and New Mexico community to accurately reflect the four student categories identified in the Yazzie-Martinez suit: Native American students; English learners; students with disabilities; and economically disadvantaged students; as well as other dimensions of student diversity. The members are: Liza Stewart, Jolene Vigil, Eric Crites, Shani Harvie, Dottie Espinosa de Ortega, Suzanne Teng, Sabrina Cook, Phillip Lopez, Rafa Tarin, Marangellie Trujillo, Roan Lucero, Gibraltar 'G' Farrell. The council's first area of focus will be to make recommendations for increasing staff diversity through the recruitment and hiring process. Council members are paid a \$100 stipend per meeting.
- The student Trans Action Club (sponsored by Mr. Ramos) is preparing for the launch of the Trans Closet on February 24. They are accepting donations of items such as gently used/unused clothing and unused personal hygiene/toiletry items. They are preparing a proposal to request support from the Parent Association.
- Art Institute Board of Trustees Member Madeleine Wright collaborated with theatre teacher/ArtReach coordinator Shayla Patton and Creative Writing Department Chair Liza Stewart to deliver an engaging, inspiring, and uplifting Black History Month celebration. There was a luncheon in partnership with the Women of Color Collective and the Cultural Room Program; and assembly, at which Madeleine was the guest speaker, and an African dance workshop.
- Jolene Vigil represented NMSA at an education options event sponsored by the Pueblo of Pojoaque Education Department.

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- Jolene Vigil and Sativa Cruz took a group of our Indigenous students on a walking field trip to the Roundhouse for American Indian Day at the Legislature 2023, followed by lunch at the Santa Fe Indian School.
- Jolene Vigil will be attending a train-the-trainer workshop this spring, which will allow us to deliver DEI trainings in-house.
- The Student Advisory Board is being re-formed as a subcommittee of the Student Council. We will spend the spring semester reviewing school policies that of particular interest to students (dress code; attendance coding for civic engagement; policies on harassment and assault).

Facilities

- We started a pest control service (rodents and insects) this month due to increased rodent activity this winter.

Safety

- The Safety Committee is researching devices to detect vaping in restrooms.
- As a safety measure, single person restrooms in Building B have been closed. Students now access single-person/gender neutral restrooms next to the counselor's office; in the nurse's office; and next to the dance studio in Building C. We have consulted with and gotten input from trans student leaders to ensure that students' rights and ease-of-use are being maintained.

Staffing

- Sarah Romero has been hired as Instructional Assistant.